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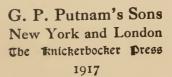


Love and Laughter

By

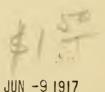
Caroline Edwards Prentiss (Mrs. George Hunt Prentiss)

Author of "Fleeting Thoughts" and "Sunshine and Shadow"



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BY
CAROLINE EDWARDS PRENTISS



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Dedicated

TO

MY HUSBAND

GEORGE HUNT PRENTISS



The writer wishes to thank those friends who have helped her by their criticism, comment, and suggestion.



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Love and Laughter



Love and Laughter

To lengthen days but lengthen laughter, Flowery ways must come thereafter.

Lest a man the good be losing, Laughter let him then be choosing.

Choosing laughter, choose the flowers That, thereafter, grace man's hours.

Lengthen days and lengthen laughter, Joy and love shall come thereafter.

Let us then choose Life to love us, Joy and laughter, love to move us.

Choosing joy and love and laughter, Flowery days must come thereafter.

HOW CHOOSE

If I may only choose one song

How could I choose?

How learn to lose

The song whose urge is overstrong?

I cannot choose

The songs to lose.

Yet those I sing I may sing wrong;

I cannot choose

So will not lose

The songs that once to me belong.

MORN, NOON, NIGHT

Morn, noon, night,
Love, death, might,
From these few notes the poets fashion
As many tunes as tears,
Music to melt heart-fears
And lilting songs that swell to passion.

MORNING

Into the open come I
Cleaving the sleepy, sad air,
Come laden with dewbuds and balsam
(God fashions the burden fair).
I come from the stars, from enchantment,
The glad flower-land all my own,
The foam-beds and forests possessing,
The summitless heaven my throne.

Into the open come I
To exult, though disaster my goal;
Through perils, my breast bared to toiling,
The child in my veins, in my soul,
I come from the stars, from enchantment,
Dropping fire and a glory the same,
The fire like gold on a pearl drop,
The heart of its whiteness aflame.

Into the open come I
And the gods, breathing beauty on me,
Wake my heart-strings to tenderest music,
Like bird songs but sweeter, more free;
I come from the stars, from enchantment,
There is joy in the beat of my wings,
My lips none too mute, none too singing,
I am king of the sun-nourished kings.

IMMORTALITY

Out of the infinite, helpless we come; Into the infinite go worn and dumb. Shackled is joy, is vision, is ruth, But safe in the travail is pain-quickened truth.

NIGHT

Into the open come I,
My eyes keeping fear well at bay:
Not bruising the weak with my footsteps
I stifle all cries, still all play.
In my zeal deathless fires o'erleaping,
Creeping under all earth-clinging bars,
I come and imperial the journey,
Come far from the dim, distant stars.

Into the open come I,
From years and their cycles of pain,
I come, bearing spoils from God's Kingdom,
Exaltation and pity the twain.
Where, oh, where, shall I lay them down gently,
These holiest holies so white,
A touch unrevering would stain them,
Where's the bed for their crystalline light?

Into the open come I,
A prophet with prophecy thrilled,
Seeking mystery in life's domination,
The passion of dreams new-fulfilled.
I'm peace to pale souls self-condemning,
To sufferers a heaven-sent shield,
My majesty comes of God's giving,
Crowned by Him to no earth king I yield.

THE EVERLASTING

Quick with agony, a soul
Sought in Death her distant balm;
In her grave Death willed her life,
Sent her forth, reborn in calm.

PLAYTHINGS

I pawned the playthings of an hour,
And with their price I sought to buy
The mystery of unearned power;
I paid the price, not asking why
The conquest of myself begun
Was but a dream—a dream half done.

I learned too late that I must pawn
The playthings of a life for gain
(No single hour of love withdrawn).
The payments made, the price of pain;
The conquest of myself—a dream
Of power fulfilled—the dream supreme.

THOUGHT

Thought smiles on me, I smile on him, We marry, heart-to-heart elate; I the servant, he my king, Elysium my new estate.

NEVERTHELESS

There's a smile in the day, Love's refrain in my heart, When the tender winds play Till the rose leaves unpart.

There's a tear in the day
For Love's heart-beat is cold,
Still the tender winds play
And the rose leaves unfold.

THE SOUL

An echo rings from shore to shore Girdling the sleepless sea, Winging through the mist to soar Upward, onward, fast and free, To its goal Eternity.

HE SLEEPS

His wonder-dreams betray Where song is, where is breath; Alike they life reveal, Where shallows are, where deeps.

His sovereign dreams allay Hurt miseries, even death; Yet on his lips a seal, The secret his, he sleeps.

A PETITION

Give me something born of Wisdom, Perfect to breathe with every breath; Something to make Life's bitter heartaches Sweet for ages, sweet in Death.

A WOMAN'S PART

Her two small hands must Pain uphold,
Must mould
The cruel thing into a grace,
Whose face
Is ever fair and unafraid.

Her longing eyes must gather Peace,
Must cease
To hold Regret a prisoner there,
A prayer
The only yearning plea betrayed.

Her heart must Memory possess,
No less
Than Love's in death and make no sign;
Divine
To hide dread sorrow in its birth.

Her soul must waft to heaven, there lay Away,
Within its brooding nest, delight,
The might
Born of her endless faith on earth.

POPULARITY

Sweet-pampered by the gaping universe,
A kingdom and a crown your fatal lot,
For as the fickle Fates their loves reverse,
New Sovereigns seek, your fame is soon forgot.

TO MY SWEETHEART

I send to you, my Sweetheart, This lily bud whose face Betokens naught but grace.

For you alone, my Sweetheart, Whose smiling eyes speak true, For you alone it grew.

FAITHLESSNESS

Aye! his the art
To mould her heart
As he might with the skill of a master,
Who magically chisels a block
Just to build of his fancy Love's statue,
Whose fingers with Death's interlock.

EXPERIENCE

Seeking knowledge I met Love And reading from his page knew Pain; Seeking Love I Knowledge found, Then Wisdom was the heart-won gain.

And now, so wise have I become,
That old-time teachers teach me not,
In turn my learning I impart,
My heart-won Knowledge not forgot.

WHY?

Between the mist and mist, the sky
Mutely holds Tomorrow fast.

Make war, the loving arms defy!
Steal, if this the power thou hast:
Seize Tomorrow—then ask why
Thou would'st know one hour's forecast.

AS OF OLD

A Sunray in far travel
Alights upon my desk,
Then glides o'er hieroglyphics
That wander, half grotesque,
Upon the moon-white pages
Like some old arabesque.

And there, as if to shame me,
The spirit over-bold,
Abides and peering curious
(When leaves on leaves unfold
Of poesy denuded)
Pierces it to the core,
And sees that in my anguish
I sing not as of yore.

Oh! Sunray, child of Heaven,
Wrought of the summer's gold,
What know you of heart-hunger,
Of earth's enslaving cold?
How know that if soul-famished,
I sing not as of old?

But, Sunray, once you touch me
And hold me in your heart,
Sweet lyrics I'll be singing,
Soul-hunger lost in part.
Then if you'll scan my pages
There poesy you'll see,
And then love's rose and silver
Will tint life's day for me.

PEACE

When you beckon Life's horizon near, So near it comes caressing you, Then find your overlook all clear, The hallowed rest of Christ in view.

FULFILMENT

Can aught but a white-souled lily Uncover her heart at will? Yield sweets to her butterfly lover Who, coveted bliss to fulfil,

Is at rest
On her breast

(The breast of the white-winged lily),
Whose bidding 'tis joy to obey:
The lily, earth's loveliest blossom,
The queen of midsummer's long day.

Yea—so doth a pure-eyed maiden Uncover her heart to one, Who, waiting her, will and adoring, His ecstasy sweet begun,

> Is at rest On her breast,

The breast of the soft-lipped maiden, Whose bidding 'tis joy to obey:

The maiden whose gladsome white spirit Smiles as the sun smiles on day.

DISAPPOINTMENT

When you lure the sunbeams to your lair, Whereby is Summer held, then find That shadows hang a curtain there, With Winter threatening behind.

THE UTMOST

A sigh, a frown, a fear, Thus life to life must speak; A smile, a sob, a tear, Thus souls each other seek.

A wish, a cry, a glance, And feeble is life's tongue; A thought, a kiss, a trance, And soul's desire is sung.

WHO CAN TELL?

Who can see
In the winter a gleam
Of the summer's warm glow?
Can there be,
From long sleep, a light dream?
Who can know?

Who can tell
How calm wakens from strife,
How a soul-cry out-rings
Pain to quell?
How a life to a life
Sobs or sings?

TWO PEARLS

I found two pearls upon the sand.
One like a fallen star,
But lit the common underworld,
There gleaming on the bar.

And one lay closer to the tide Where sea-foam touched its face; Its little tender gleam lay dead, Smothered its yearning grace.

Then on the shore I found two souls.

One held the torch of fame,
Lifting its hopeful fire afar,
As star to star its flame.

And one went over to the brink
Of murmuring waters, where
Life's waves o'erwhelmed its feeble light,
Unsaved by grace or prayer.

LITTLE TO LITTLE

If little to little be wedded,

There's a ponderous hill part begun

And when built by the brawny ungrateful

Its peak may uplift to the sun.

ATONEMENT

A twig, and lo the leaves show fair, In the dread, the hitherto unknown, The first-born of the spring, they came, For the dark of winter to atone.

A life, and lo, new grace is here, In unguessed, unsought, fruitful ways, The first-born of the soul to be, Glad love atoning for dead days.

WAR

Oh War,
I may
Not wean you from the lust of gore,
Nor stay
The treachery that long endures
And lures
Into your soul-destroying lair
The buoyant young—the ever fair.

Oh War,
Unslain
You are, through poisoned days and more,
Through pain,
Through all the devastating years,
Through tears,
Though every human ill
Lay on your heart enough to kill.

Unslain till women will to pray,
And leagued against your shameless strife
Shall conquer all your evil way,
And kill your brutal, venomed life.

THE DIPLOMAT

Deceit is the cloak that a courtier wears long As a polished, a baffling pretence, Whereunder, protected, he canny and strong, It with smiles but beguiling your sense.

LOVE'S SECRET

Perhaps the silent eyes, the lair May be the lips love-fraught, Or else a silken tress the snare Wherein my heart is caught.

Perhaps my instant weal or woe
Is held within a glance.
How learn the secret I would know,
If love be snared by fate or chance?

VANITY

Come, place your hand in mine My Vanity and let
Me there your seal confine,
Till chance, I may forget
The burdens you ne'er cease
To lay upon my peace.

So Vanity, I hold
Your mighty hand in mine,
Thus if too baneful-bold
I sooner may divine
Your evils, quicker kill
Them ere they slay my will.

WHAT IS SLEEP?

Is sleep the heart's contentment,
Day's memories there subdued?
Is a dream the changed or changeless,
Is it self in self renewed?

Is sleep the ringing foretime, Whose world is unexplored? Is a dream life's finished glory, Love's promise therein stored?

Is a dream its silent sea? The sea whereon if sailing, Sails the soul to Destiny?

LOVE-SONG

Of Harmonies the purest
One little tune I hear,
That, with the south-wind floating,
Is wondrous glad and clear.

It trembles ere alighting,
Then, choosing me, comes near,
Enters my heart to fill it,
Displacing dread and fear.

THE PLAY

Waiting for the curtain's rise,
To show the quick and mimic play,
Side by side sit sinners, saints,
The unpaid actors, who betray
As many moods as men are there,
Moods dark as night, moods heavenly fair.

Suddenly the stage is gay
With actors working for a wage,
Joy and sorrow they betray,
Painted youth and painted age;
Laughing, dancing, great the glee,
Saints or sinners they can be.

Puppets either way they play, Paid or unpaid actors they. Hither, thither, they must run As the race was first begun;

Laughing, dancing swift or slow, Lawful, lawless on they go. Saints or sinners, they forget That they must pay God's unpaid debt.

BIRD-SONG

The poet harks to the bird-song,
The plaint and the pleading to part:
The lover but hears in the trilling
The cry of the human heart.

Am I lover or poet that bird-songs
Sing a pæan—and only to me,
Just a note that no other soul heareth
Till my heart again sings it to thee?

FORTUNE

Your quiverful of frowns or favors
Holds gifts of rosy summer time,
Promises that heavenward open
If, in love, they wake sublime.

Fair destinies you keep in hiding When smiles your sunny heritage; Sudden sleep for men in anguish, Resignation held for age.

Your kindness lost in jealous angers, You kill with overvenomed darts, Cruelly shooting poisoned arrows, Stabbing beauty, stabbing hearts.

Slaves are we to your caprices
And targets for your piercing aim,
We play Life's game without its hazard;
Freedom's but an empty name.

JUST A RIFT

Just a halt in the world's wildest hurry,
As with Silence Death sets his long seal.
Just a rift in expectant far-Heaven,
As mourning our loved ones we kneel.

Just a hush falling over the angels,
As the rift of the sky closes in,
Just a sigh of benignant, sweet mercy,
As they welcome souls severed from sin.

TO A FRIEND

The Greetings of Long-Ago

Tonight we have come
Out of the silent shadow-land
And out of the long-ago;
Dreaming the dreams we used to dream,
The mystery of Life to know—
As in days of long-ago!

Tonight we have come
In robes soft-woven of white and gold
And fashions of long-ago;
In garb that maids were fain to wear
When Love was yearning, life aglow,—
As in days of long-ago!

Tonight we have come,
To bring from a dear and vanished hand
The clasp of a long-ago,
Yet love-light pales when life-dreams seem
But Fame that happy fates bestow—
As in days of long-ago!

Tonight we have come,
Through shadows dim that now unfold,
Revealing the long-ago;
To greet fair youth who, free, may care
For Life, Love and Fame.—Be it so,—
The greetings of long-ago.

WOUNDED

Curling over to the stem
A rose-leaf met a cruel thorn.
Stabbed—the petal shed her tears,—
Thus of ruddy beauty shorn.

And so my heart was piercéd through
By faithlessness, whose sharpened dart
Stung fierce and deep to hurt, not kill.
But my soul fell fainting from the smart.

TEMPTATION

Cross swords with me, the fight is long, Find me glad and find me strong.

Love's fairest flowers offer me, Inward glories let me see.

Hold a victory near my hand, Imprisoned, show me freedom's land,

Cross swords with me, the fight be long, Find me glad and find me strong.

THE RUBY

The blood of Life's warfare imbibing, In your veins the red rivers swift roll. A mirror, you image Love's wonder And the fervours consuming its soul.

Insatiate your eye is reflecting
The desire that is Love's—his alone—
'Tis fire to fire eternal,
Less immortal your heart than my own.

THE HYPOCRITE

"I'm not as other sinners are,"
The wily hypocrite soft said,
Friends thought him over good to die,
And yet he lay among the dead.

Then spectres from his past arose, Rough hands despoiled him of his fame; Once loving him none loved him then, His life despised, his name a shame.

IN LOVE TO MAKE AMENDS

After his death they go away,
These friends who bid me, kneeling, pray
To ask my God to hold my heart
Unbreaking, while the sting and smart
Of Sorrow hurt me sore,
Bruising me more on more.

They go away, well satisfied, While I, heart-hunger once denied, I ask of Grief the reason why I must bear pain with no outcry. I pray as men have prayed, "God keep me unafraid."

These friends, they love me true and yet Compassionate, they must forget; While I must fight my fight and ask My God to help me in the task, Blending with tears my plaint, My tortured heart beats faint.

At last there comes a new-born day, When sunshine seems with me to stay And change my darkest day to light. God has altered pain to might. Now come to me, my friends, In love, I'll make amends.

HAPPINESS

Within four walls I know a fair,
If little, world of dazzling light,
For true love came and settled there;
'Twas Happiness dark could not blight.

A VAGABOND

A vagabond, of race I'm proud, As proud as any king might be; A king has treasures I have not, Yet he's a slave, while I am free.

Kingdoms bought in blood has he, Gold and subjects at his call, A queen to kneel at his command, Yet, sceptred, still is he in thrall.

His jewelled crown bears heavily,
No heart is his that he holds true;
His soul is under lock and key,
His intimates are false and few.

While I can count the world my own,
Every hearth a friendly place,
A love for asking I can find,
A light in every nameless face.

The golden sun my treasure is,
My million subjects everywhere,
The creeping things that warm the trail,
The flying things that grace the air.

A vagabond am I—and glad
That freedom is of life the leaven,
As proud am I of my estate
As angels are of theirs in Heaven.

A PILGRIM

A pilgrim at the shrine kneels long, Begs Destiny to stay its hand; Because his worldly heart beats strong, Looks down, his soul to understand.

The pilgrim lays away desire,
His human heart in firm control,
And by his shrine of flame and fire
Looks up to realize his soul.

THE FACTORY GIRL

Heigho-lack-a-day—
The overweary maiden sang,
She must work and never play,
Work driven by the mill's harsh clang.

Heigho-lack-a-day—
The maiden's sudden cry outrang—
Whipped by factories that flay
The strongest of the feeble gang.

Heigho-lack-a-day—
The anguished cry a shriller twang—
Falling white—a corpse the prey—
Buried to the mill's fierce clang.

SCULPTURE

This child of mine can mould the smudgy clay
And spirits of the world there wake alive,
Called thither at her cry—their hearts in play—
Or shriven if her magic power can shrive.

A child of mine, yet spite her mystic ways
She fails, for spent her powers she could not
bring

Life's melodies into her plastic clays, Nor fix the song the nightingale doth sing.

So much to keep eternal, yet her hands,

No cunning have to mould the heaven's

white way,

No colour can she set that Time withstands, Nor hold in sight the glories of one day.

AGE

Just in my prime,
One day I met
A foe called Time.
In fight he let
Me cross my sword with his,
A pretty play!
I would defy,
Yet I obey,
And "Fool" I cry,
When Time the Conqueror is.

I pay to him
My little all,
The eyes that dim,
The rose in thrall
Once sleeping on my cheek;
And he demands
The tribute of
My trembling hands,
And even Love
Before his glance grows weak.

Then courage, smiles
Are feeble, slow;
No grace beguiles
Me from my woe.

I weary of the fight;
My fervor slain,
My sword is his,
Nothing my gain,
Each day I wis
Creeps nearer to the night.

MOODS

A lullaby in chanting,
A shiver of the wind,
A grief on grief descanting,
A subtle hurt to find.

A love astray in longing,
A loss too quick with pain,
A faith that dies of wronging,
A sacrifice in vain.

A noontime gone to madness, A darkness sudden white, A lull in sweet soul-sadness, A day that blazons light.

A dream in words unspoken,
A fancy born in song,
A silence, long unbroken,—
These moods to life belong.

ANGER

Steeped in petty, paltry passion
Anger makes a Thing of man,
Who fashions fate as hammers fashion
Hot steel, when poor the artisan.

YOUTH AND AGE

To youth and age
May Time presage
Great gifts, each precious in its way;
To youth, Love's dream,
To age, the gleam
Of Truth that shall for youth repay.

To age the kind,
Assuréd mind
That safely holds a hallowed trust!
The soul that serves,
That Love conserves,
In spite of Fate's estranging thrust.

To age the true
Sweet faith, as new
As Springtime after winter's cold;
The tenderness,
Time's best caress,
That wraps age around with fold on fold.

HALFWAY

Blurring the vision of glad day
Grief spoils the sweetness of love's hour,
Strips earth of summer's bud and flower,
Scattering woes the ragged way.
Am I a coward that I shrink
Into his footsteps deep to sink,
To walk with Grief, my hand in his,
Over dead bloom, over dead bliss?

A coward that I love the day
Full of blossoming and glow,
Warm with love-light where I go?
Life bids me walk with Grief halfway,
Roses in one hand to keep
And then o'er withered bloom to weep:
But at last the lips of Life I kiss,
Grateful to know one hour of bliss.

The hour that love-light sheds quick rays Back more than halfway o'er dead days.

JOY

Beginning the day Joy sings triumphantly And clad in shining robes of rose and white Is wingéd Youth, The heart's delight:

But twin of ruth

Soon must his laughing song a wailing be, Soon must his shining robes of rose turn grey,

Changing forsooth To show Life's way,

It's eternal truth,

That song and laughter, light and all gay things Must stifle, sicken, die with drooping wings.

MY BOOK

I have a book
Wherein I look,
To see if there I find a sign
Whereof the word
Is softly heard
In singing rhymes of line on line.

And sometimes I
Can hear a sigh
That floats between the finished leaves;
A sob I hear,
As though a tear
With gayer melodies inweaves.

This book is glad,
Its music mad
Sings sweet through all my dreaming hours,
And as it plays
Through all my days,
I love its song as earth loves flowers.

IMAGINATION

He draws from deeps that have no soundings, He gathers grace from heights unknown, And drifting onward, seaward, skyward Is a king—aloof if not alone.

The mighty forces nature cradles, Are quick or sleeping at his will; And even love he makes life-lasting, While youth he holds for ever still.

And lavishly the easy spendthrift Scatters his songs all men among; Yet wise is he, his wisdom telling; So children read his simple tongue.

Aye King is he, with endless kingdoms
Circled with summer's softest air,
With mystic fancies ever peopled
These alien lands are ever fair.

DECEMBER

Grim and gaunt December stands, His haunt the howling wilderness; The long, rough way he understands, No cooing breeze melts his duress.

The devastating wind, his pride,
Although the shivering worlds protest;
With unforbearing fiends allied
He only is content—at rest.

JUST TEARS AND TEARS

His heart is stilled and yet I wait
Listening for speech—long lost in sleep;
I search his eyes for light again,
Not finding what I want—I weep.

Just tears and tears and who shall weigh My grief by such a sign as this? But watching you could see my pain When his cold lips refuse my kiss.

Just tears and tears the long day through, 'Tis ever so the sad heart cries,
But oh, for one small moment when
I could but see his paradise.

If my hurt soul could follow his,

To reach his Heaven where no one weeps,

My tears and tears would fewer be—

I'd know God's peace that never sleeps.

NEAR TO SLEEP

When cradled by a cloud I swing
(The soft and wavering winds a-wing
To chant my lullabies)
I swing to wayward skies,
Where crimson tints betray the day—
Where moonbeams silver half the way.

And swung a-nigh to shadow lands,
Sleep's hushed encroachment I withstand
To linger there a while
With the purpling sun's last smile.
But while I'm brooding over this,
I yield to night's endearing kiss.

SOME DAYS

Some days are but the haunting ghosts Of yesterdays I would forget; Possessing me, they come with hosts Of wrongs deep weighted with regret.

And then some days I fain recall
The subtle honied words that calm,
The mystic things that seemed life's all,
Things eloquent of heart-sweet balm.

The dear enduring things that come Proclaiming light, though it be dark; Of yesterdays this magic sun Lays hand on me its might to mark.

Then some days I but see the sun Shining its way where'er I glance, There I see Love not dead but won, Beginning with me my life's romance.

SLEEP

In silent and far shadowland,
I feel a soft, compelling hand
Close over me,
So I can be
No wanderer and fly away,
Back in the world of men to stay.

So languorous and strange the place,
Whose dark has yet a tender face,
That there I bide,
The distant wide,
Soft shadowland my restful bed,
The dark wherein love's dreams are bred.

THE CIRCUS

There merry men are valiant ones, Brave women dally long with life; A husband in the daring play Flings danger to his willing wife.

And early as the child can spell
Is self-control his alphabet;
His hand must guide, must brutes command,
His feet must not their tricks forget.

He must essay new wingéd flights
And from the canvas heaven look down,
Look down upon the gaping crowd
To win his laurel wreath, his crown.

One awful moment as he falls,
The moans of many men arise,
His mother's courage in his soul,
He wins God's Heaven as his prize.

There merry men are valiant ones;
With hearts of horror, aping fun,
They hazard lives as though in play—
No chance to weep, the game begun.

LONGING

Dear heart of mine, I want you madly While my untired eyes are bright, I want you when the hours drag sadly, When, sightless, all my day is night.

I want you when you're worn and weeping
And when your changing mood is gay,
I want you, dear, my heart in keeping,
To be my seeing eyes, my day.

MY BABY

'Twas after many days, when I had been Near shadow land, so weak I wept, And waking to this world of din, They told me that my baby slept, The sleep that long its silence kept.

And why Should I Be left, Bereft

Of all my aching heart had craved?

Just I, who from my starvéd life

My hungry soul for her had saved.

Just I, who learned man's love from strife,

Not e'en in name a lawful wife.

A wife, A life, And then, Again

The baby spirit passing by
E'er I had heard its first-born wail,
Its faint and fitful mother-cry;
For such a joy all others pale;
When I so wanted this, why fail?

Ah me, To be Alive, To shrive

Myself of sin and make me true
Is all I ask of Heaven, just this:
To make my woman's soul anew,
That I may reach my utmost bliss,
The guerdon of my baby's kiss.

MUSIC

Men search the peopled ways for song
Whose soul is summoned from the sea,
Whose fire is earth's, in flame outburst,
Whose sweet desire is melody,

For song with no discordant note
Of life's long moan and agony;
For heart-songs with the tender tunes
To tame untamed humanity,

For song whose chant is low to please
The child untaught in minstrelsy,
The toiler worn with age too soon,
The sick who pay pain's penalty.

But saints who haunt the heavens for song, Hear pure, unbroken harmony, Which human lips, in worship, sing In sacramental ecstasy.

A PENITENT

Conquering sleep lays lips on mine, Lays on my heart its light caress, And I, I worship at its shrine, A penitent, my sins confess.

Then Sleep betrays not as I fear,
And ne'er a penance doth impose:
But, as a saviour, holds me dear
And stills my quaking, quick heart-throes.

THE MERMAID

Skimming close to the face of the ruffled blue sea,

Can a mermaid the raindroppings hear? Can she fancy the blossoming daisy-white lea, Or the glow of the still-fading year?

Can she hear, sinking lower, song-sirens that charm,

As they fly through the pink coral deeps?

Of what measure the loves that her heart-fears disarm?

What the dreams that arise when she sleeps?

Has she fellows to follow, a hand in her hand?

Is her firmament lit with a star?

Wakes a moon, or a sun, at her whispered command?

Does she ride in a dragon-drawn car?

Is her garment of rose with a silvery sheen,

Does her hair fall in pale golden curls?

And in gathering treasure, what gems can she

And in gathering treasure, what gems can she glean

For her crown, over-broidered with pearls?

Buried under the restless, the murmuring blue sea,

Is she dancing, her grief to dispel?
Is there somewhere a place, a fair heaven to be?
Has the mermaid a soul, who can tell?

SHE LOVES ME

In the gloaming have you listened To the patter of the rain? Have you heard it soft-repeating, Just a laughing, light refrain?

In a murmur, swift-surprising, Have you ever heard it tell, Of the jealous-guarded secrets Of the sky from which it fell?

In the gloaming I am listening
To the patter of the rain,
And it whispers to me something,
In a laughing, light refrain.

Yes, a secret out of heaven,
Though it surely is of earth;
Just the sweet refrain—she loves me,
In rain-music has its birth.

MEMORY'S MOODS

If memory play a pleasant part, She smiles and smiles away my heart; Spiteful, she spoils the sunny days, In bitterness her half debt pays.

And naught I ask or aught could be Can change these moods of memory, And so companioned, side by side, With joy and grief I must abide.

TIME

A soul I am, sin-free, new born, On earth commanding what I will; An overlord, I stay the morn And hold the flying century still.

All darkest hours with joy I mate,
Make sweet the strong, make brave the weak;
And suffering long a silent state,
I make all nature's mutes to speak.

The trees and hills praise me in prayers,
The rivers voice a joyous theme,
And what a happy tongue is theirs—
When day is whitest and supreme.

A soul I am, yet I must know
The world, its every mystic thrill;
So I this hour my heaven forego
To hold the flying century still.

UNPRAISED

A single singing bird can fill
The lucent atmosphere with song;
Returning spring wakes in its trill
All men and maids, a praising throng.

A poet sings, and spring days hold No sweeter sounds than his unpraised, He yet finds men and maidens cold, His first unfolding song unpraised.

MY MUSE

The day is drear with sullen tears
And all the winter waste is blurred,
Yet I am close to gladdest years,
My muse in thrilling music heard.
While wrapped in sunshine, fold on fold,
Old Time our dying must withhold.

THE POET

Sweet lyrics sing their simple way
Into the hearts of child or man,
Man perfectly attuned to play,
The child whose soul his years outran;
And poets may be proud to pen
These little thoughts for such a child,
For children who are wearied men,
Whose ache comes from a day defiled.

But oh, what poet would not speak
The one resounding word that tells
Of wrath that must its vengeance wreak,
So that its blow a wrong dispels;
That he a magic wand might raise,
Bring earth to heaven and heaven to earth,
And, singing with great gods, sing praise,
From woe to wake but smiles and mirth.

So he would steal the sting from crime,
Would, kissing, heal the bleeding smart,
Then, dallying a day with time,
Would halt the grief that seeks man's heart:
And he might shape the shapeless soul
With ruin sunken-eyed and cowed,
Then lead him on to pity's goal,
There mask his face his sin avowed.

While seizing from the heavens anew
The sense wherein man's love is bred,
The poet finds the wonder true,
Hell's foul and lying love instead:
Then sometimes is he mad with dreams
And gathering lyrics from the past,
Each happy one more joyous seems,
As sung, the summer to forecast.

With lyrics may the poets please
The children of a sunny day,
But kissing bleeding wounds they ease
The anguished souls who weep,
And so, if poets healers be
For this they ask nor gold, nor gain,
Suffice it if their lyrics key
In tune with songs that sweet remain.

BELLS AND BELLS

Into silvered silence breaking,
Scarce uttering a whispered note,
Life speaks, in bells and bells soft-singing
The love-words that in ether float.

In silence, sun-arrayed and rosy,
The mother dreams her first fine dreams,
Dreams sung, in bells and bells outwinging
Till all the world a radiance seems.

In denser silence, dark with doubting, Revealing hosts of frightened things, Hearts cry, in bells and bells outflinging The beating of Death's raven wings.

But, breaking into golden silence
A single sound stirs far away,
Then near, in bells and bells, sweet-ringing
To say that Christ is risen today.

As each bell breaks the golden silence Surprising souls from thinking men, Listen! in bells and bells outswinging Are prayers that sing themselves again.

PRISCILLA

Priscilla is my laughing lady,
Past mistress of the pleasing art,
Wherewith, in sorcery bewitching,
She steals away from me my heart.

And mocking is this little lady,
For this one theft will not atone,
She flouts me while my heart in keeping,
Withholds the giving of her own.

IN AND OUT

In and out, in and out,
Threaded shuttles go,
In and out, round about,
Suddenly, then slow.

In and out, webs to weave, Silken and spun gold; In and out, a thread to leave Run fine in damask fold.

In and out, in and out,
Busy shuttles play,
In and out, round about,
Life's o'ertangled day.

In and out, a web to weave, Silken and spun gold, In and out, a thread to leave That Sorrow shall enfold.

In and out, in and out,
Wearied shuttles cease—
First to spin silk threads about
The web of golden Peace.

RETOLD

Oh Time, instead of telling me
That lurking in my single hour
Which stretches to Eternity,
Is budding thought that may not flower,
Tell me that in this hour I find
Flowering thought whose buds unfold,
Fulfilled sweet blossoms of the mind,
Rare truths in beauty thus retold.

EXPIATION

A wanderer, man asks no boon
Of Fate, whose spikéd arms must flay,
And flay him walking (ash o'erstrewn)
Life's vanishing and once green way;
The way where fire soon charred all things
That overmaster if they please,
Beauty, pomp, and wealth that brings
To sufferers no light nor ease.

A wanderer, his earth is set
With cruel thorns that tear his feet,
His day is dark, with blood stains wet,
And naught is left there seeming sweet,
Yet, in the gloom he seeks to find
The gleam of many little lights
That rise exultant in the mind
When happiness with peace unites.

He walks the burning ash-strewn way,
Till suddenly the fire is dead
And flowers again the once green day
As Fate bestows a boon instead,
The one impassioned hour wherein
God's firmament has spread its glow
Upon his expiated sin,
His heritage of waste and woe.

BE TRUE

Are you

Full satisfied if mating winds be sweet
And lull you, prisoned, into melting dreams
Where unrestraint and soulless pleasures meet,
Forgetting, in this destiny, its means?

Be true

And rather ask that mating winds be strong, Whose beating wings arrest and wake your soul,

So wild and crimson glamours be not long— So bruiséd days wake happily and whole.

LOST FANCIES

Adown the wildering, winding way
Of flying time I go
To look for Fancies gone astray,
Whose every name I know,
Rose, violets and lilies too—
All rooted where they, winging, flew.

By light of dreams inwoven so
With moonshine that I see,
I find them where they rooted grow
In blossoming to be
My sweet and mellowed mysteries,
My Fancies, my lost melodies.

I call them by the names I gave
To each in tenderness,
Seeking their love for me to save
I would their souls possess—
Rose, violets and lilies too,
Rooted where they, winging, flew.

They answered me but would not come—How could they, rooted so?
They could not, winging, fly back home,
They could not come, ah, no!
So lost to me my mysteries,
My Fancies, my sweet melodies.

TRADITION

Tradition chains me, dumb as in a trance, Wake, Revelation! wear the bonds away, Then will my life be young unshamed romance As into Freedom's endless realm I stray.

JUST ONE

Oh happiness!
Leave one of all thy joys to me,
Just one—that in my meagre days
The twilight shall not hastened be,
That morning in my pleasure stays.

No more, no less—
Just one pure joy with no desire
To roam in radiancy and far,
Just one, all mine, for ever mine,
Of my lone heritage the star.

POVERTY AND WEALTH

Companions in the city streets,
Walk shambling Poverty and Wealth,
But Poverty, in tears, retreats,
Treading with heavy foot and stealth.

While Wealth, shod easily and fine— His stalking self soft wound about With silvered robes where gems outshine, Wears affluence the day throughout.

Wealth dangles gold and with it buys Sad sin, with pain the aftermath, While Poverty, though hunger-wise, Shares half the single crust he hath.

Then Poverty, soft wrapped in grace—
The raiment of a silken sheen—
Stands glorified in paupered space,
The noonday smiling in his mien.

ENOUGH FOR ME

I never longed to journey where
Adventure might in peril be,
But rather my uplifted prayer
For near sweet-sheltering would be;
If Tragedy be lurking there,
Pray Love to change its destiny.

I never longed to hasten days
Whose uttermost I would not know,
Enough for me the sunny rays
Of this one day's revealing glow.

HOPE AND FEAR

Hope loves me, for I love its rose, Fear hates me for I fear it so, But Hope its rose doth interpose My fear of Fear to overthrow.

MARJORIE SWEET

Marjorie sweet, will you be mine
And let me kiss you as I will,
Since to your tears I must incline
As to your rippling laughter thrill?

No thought of yours I would not know,
To me your faintest voice is clear,
And nearer to your heart to grow
I would hold you ever dear.

Marjorie sweet, why hide your face, So loath to yield yourself to me, For when so potent is your grace, Fathom I must its mystery.

Your glooming cannot daunt my will, My heart will kiss your laughter, tears, My soul to yours will ever thrill, Far on, far on untroubled years.

THE SHADOW

Life's shadow holds within its dark
Love's mangled beauties and its aches,
God's tomb it is, the shielding mark
That Pity in his mercy makes.

UNDERCURRENTS

The grieving of a lonely child,
Shorn both of faith and tenderness;
The child whose day is spoiled with tears
Untuned to love-sung happiness.

The shrinking of a woman's heart,
So strained that must it break in twain;
The strings vibrating to the love
Whose song is e'er recalled in vain.

The murder of a man's delight,
His power deep rent with failing will,
Success, his god of worship, dead—
And dead his singing sweet heart-thrill.

So all these grieving ones must weep In hidden places of the soul, And, yet, sing artifice in song And, tricking self, smile on, cajole.

TOO DEAR

Who holds within his hands one year, Whose strange completeness is too dear,

Must loose his hold And round him fold

The years whose drifting days are sad, Too incomplete, nor dear, nor glad;

> And yet he may The loss delay,

Remembering in a dream the year Whose strange completeness was too dear.

MAKE-BELIEVE

So many drifting thoughts to weave,
I set them in a shining loom,
Then broider them in Make-believe
And paint them pink as flower-bloom.

The threads so fine and soft to spin,
That Love no subtler ones could find
(Wherewith his raiment to begin,
Its rose red-glamour there refined).

In Make-believe I spin all days,
So purity and hope weave white
In singing looms that live always,
And weave thereof Life's true delight.

7

POWER

The light that enters into sorrow
In crucibles of faith refined;
Hope burning incense to the morrow,
Its fragrant fire, the might of Mind.

THE ARTIST

'Tis thine, the subtle master hand
That seized the heart of Lady-Fair
And held it near, to understand
The way to paint it as 'tis there
On canvas, heart within her eyes,—
Eyes blue as blue from Paradise.

And (as you pictured first her face,
Then fixed the fragrance of her mind)
You caught the essence of her grace
And drew it with a touch so kind
That it veiled her delicate as mist—
Mist, by the flush of morn soft kissed.

Oh, Lady-Fair, portrayed a queen, Your soul is sunlight to the shade; A flower you are, arrayed in sheen A moon in tender weaving made; Of queens, the queen, smile yes to me In answer to my lover's plea.

SWEETHEART

Just out of sleep I wake to dream
Again the dream, I dreamed of you;
In night's deep gloom it is the gleam
That lights my doubting soul anew.

Oh Sweetheart! as in sleep you loved—So love me even now and say
The little word of heart approved,
That you are mine this dreamless day.

THE BLIND

Long lurking in the shadow I
Am frightened in the barren place.
I feel its menace, standing by,
Muffling my soul, my stricken face.

The dark so endless that I know That though I walk there to and fro Its deeps will hold me ever fast, Its aimless silence o'er me cast.

Thus lost in desolation I

Am halted with retarded feet,
Yea, dwarfed, until I learn to fly,
Fly on where night and morning meet.

I fly with wings God gives me, so To roam where only Thoughts can go, In places thronged with shape on shape, Where soul and I in song escape.

THE FRUITFUL HOUR

Of all my youth there was no flower, No single blossom of the mind, And now in age, the fruitful hour, Rich harvesting of soul I find.

The youth I loved was void of rose,
And planting seeds
I planted weeds,
And now the seeds I plant are those
That grow apace,
Whose buds grow grace,
The bloom of mind that opes a rose.

THE DEAF MUTE

No fellowship with men have I, No song of winging grass I hear, Nor least of melodies, a sigh To pierce my ever silent sphere.

But I can see, see Spring turned gay, And down its unrebuking way I mount my dream to ride the steed With guileless pleasure in the lead.

Bending the meadow-poppies low, I see the breezes blown to rest; See tremors of the day run slow, The foretaste of the dying west.

See beauty bloom and fade the year; But could I once sweet music hear When homing shadows past me fly, We'd know lost heaven, my soul and I.

THE SONG WRITER

Just let him speak in song alone
And few will score his lack of wit,
His thoughts will hidden be, unknown
As though in secret cypher writ;
Though tinged with heart's blood few will read
Or understand his mystic creed.

OVER ALL

Over all
The music of the hours
Whose dawn is risen after
The shadow-fallen showers,
One hears the song and laughter
Of golden-hearted flowers.

Over all
The tunes of leaves a-kissing,
No faintest tremor missing,
One hears the dewdrop shiver,
Its bleeding heart aquiver,
Afraid of hurt in falling,
While wanton winds are calling.

Over all
The music of Life's hours
Whose dawn is risen after
The night wherein one cowers,
One hears the song and laughter
Of Love, its heart-sweet flowers.

Over all
The tunes of lips a-kissing,
No faintest echo missing,
One hears the soul soft shiver
Its bleeding heart aquiver,
Afraid of hurt in falling
Should Death its love be calling.

COMPENSATION

I craved the Summer's largess, Her dream, her scented boon; She gave me tears—yet rose-leaf, The happy heart of June.

I sought Life's fairest bounty,
True love's unwasting good;
She gave me grief—yet glory
And a heart the world withstood.

LOVE AWAKES

Love forsakes
The long noon of the rose-scented ways,
And awakes
In a riot of soft-lulling days,
Yet is mated to music and madness,
Sweet as sighs of the sea singing gladness.

Love is near,
Love is dear,
Love is mine
As the sea-sighs incline
To the mating of music and madness,
Overwrought in the joy of life's gladness.

CONQUEST

Fond of life's tumult I battle
For Self, lest it break in the war,
Break ere the carnage is finished,
While carnage holds conquest in store.

THE UNSEEING

So lost in shadowland am I, I ne'er can wander from its thrall, And yet my lagging feet would fly And follow nature's wildest call.

My groping hands can kiss the flowers, Their perfumed hearts can beat for me And I can hear the whispering hours, Hear secrets blossomed from the sea.

I sense the day, its highest noon, My dark the dark of starless night And Love I know, his voice in tune With all the mysteries of light.

His melody enfolds me so,

That my heaven opens through his song,
Yet could I see, see earth's warm glow,
My feet would fly the clouds among.

For I would fly the wingéd way
Of seraphs floating towards the sun;
My soul of souls, this prayer I pray
Once let me see God's day begun.

LONELINESS

As with cold courage armed, I smile and dare
To enter Loneliness in regal state,
And unassuaged the burden I can bear
Though, hurt in heart, I proudly bear my
fate.

True, I can bear the bruising loneliness,
The longing of a tender heart at bay,
Yet I would sheltered be, brave life the less,
Call Love and keep him comrade day by day.

IF ONLY IN A DREAM

Wrought in a day the love I bear
And proudly wear;
I ask not if I woo in vain,
My spirit fain
Capitulates, then gives you more
Of my heart's store.

How could I spend my ecstasy
Risen to thee,
Save in this dream your lips to kiss,
So seize my bliss
If only in a dream I may
My love betray.

SUNSHINE'S MORROW

O'erwhelmed with direful days of sorrow Joy's little hour is almost dead, And yet the glint of Sunshine's Morrow Wings near him, thus to overspread His darkness with a gladsome glory,—Joy's aftermath in sweeter story.

SUDDEN MUSIC

Sudden sweet music flies to me, It skims along from tree to tree, A lilting, soft and tricksy tune, Wind-borne and speeding through the June.

A lilting tricksy tune to me, It sings of lover's dreams to be, And fills the long dead days with bliss And joy as pure as love's first kiss.

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FORGOTTEN HOURS

How bring them back—forgotten hours,—
Long lost in life's great wilderness?
Can they be born again in flowers,
Their fragrance but the sweet redress
For pain and truth,
That spoiled my youth
And mated me to loneliness?

I'd call them if they could but hear:
And think you they would know my voice,
Like ghosts returning to this sphere
Awake and with me once rejoice,
Laugh once again,
Sing joy's refrain,
Bring love, first love that was my choice.

THE DIAMOND

Embosomed in my hand I hold A bauble glistening amber gold: The gleams of rosy sunlight dart Within its clear white crystal heart.

God holds me so in His strong hand, My soul, the crystal to withstand Life's drifting colours dark or sad, Keeping my heart both pure and glad.

IN LONELY STATE

Hushed as woodland deeps When wearied daytime sleeps, Is my long and lonely state, My heart disconsolate.

No laughter turned to bliss, No song in this abyss, No stirring of dead air That rising might be prayer.

I wonder who will come And fathoming the numb And dreary self of me, Then kiss me tenderly—

So I will wake and find Glad music in the wind; Eternal harmony Once risen sweet for me.

Love, pity me and come And change me, wan and dumb, To radiancy, a thing To pray, to laugh, to sing.

IN A GOLDEN HOUR

Born of a golden hour is song
And wild its first sweet voyaging,
The flight as far, as swift, as long,
As that of homing birds a-wing.

Song searching heaven's own blue for rest, So searching earth's bedewed wide space, It seeks my heart in final quest And finds therein a nesting place.

SWEET MUSIC

The Summer's sigh, sweet music is, Heaven's voice to mortal madness, A memory new-born to bliss With a tender touch of sadness.

'Tis rhythm soft enticing me
To leave behind heartaching,
A grief forgotten flowing free
In minor harmonies outbreaking.

Waking sweet from long repose
When Music steals into my quiet,
It soothes again fresh wakened woes,
And lulls my pain's too poignant riot.

Oh! Music, Music, call me long, My soul will thrill in its replying; Its hopes will sing a song for song, A symphony undying.

DRIFTING

Drifting, I am drifting,
Unsought, unguessed the goal,
In pain to passion shifting,
I pay the world my toll.

DEFEAT

A frail incompetent am I,
Juggling with my happiness,
Tossing the cup of joy so high
It turns and spills its lavishness
All spoiled and at my feet.

Such ample store of joy was there,
So little that I might have had,
Yet not a precious thing my share:
Life owed me something good and glad,
Some secret oversweet.

A frail incompetent am I
Routed by a dauntless foe:
Yearning, when I would defy,
The cup of chance but threw me woe—
I die in my defeat

FAIR MISTRESS

I need not tell you what I could
Or would to let you know my heart,—
I need not tell you, for you know
And see it true, my speech apart.

You see it shining in my eyes,—
No secret there you cannot find,
Love's ecstasy you soon divine,
Fair mistress of my might and mind.

LIKE BUTTERFLIES

With no reluctant, heavy tread
The days pass by,
They wingéd fly,
But speeding to the past, fall dead,
And with them goes the heart of me,
Unshamed yet worn with misery.

In hurried flight new days are here,
Not asking why
They too must die,
Buried to be in leaf grown sere:
Not asking they and I ask not,
For the heart of me is dead, forgot.

God's requiem is sung for them
And sung for me:
I make no plea
For life, nor do I death condemn;
Once only we in sunshine fly
Like butterflies—in an hour to die.

HEARTS FOR SALE

Know you of the merchants Whose barter is time-old, Selling hearts for silver, Buying them with gold?

They ply their trade in open, They hold a life for gain, But lost to them is something Their traffic may not stain.

Fools they are, forgetting
That a world of shining gold
In barter buys nor sells not,
Dear love, the love time-old.

THE AUTOMOBILE

Whizzing and whirring,
The breath of me swift,
I fly as birds stirring,—
May's petals adrift.

Straight I am going, Speeding the way, Wilder, then slowing To idle the day.

Long enough staying
To gossip with flowers;
Mastery displaying,
Fly fast as the hours.

Whirring and purring,
I tremble then hush,
New conquests averring,
On and on rush.

On to the river,

To hills at the top—
A gasp and a quiver,
A victor to stop.

FICKLE FORTUNE

Life held me 'gainst his breast awhile, Caresses on my lips he pressed, In sweet communion to beguile Me from the cruel world's unrest.

So kind his kiss, I thought him mine
And thought his love the love supreme:
My youth to him was sweet, divine,
But ah! his fervour proved a dream.

He left me turned adrift to face
Hate's frozen breath, Grief's storm blown
wild,

Of his warm tenderness no trace To cheer his disillusioned child.

THE DREAMER

My tired eyes have seen the ghosts
Of my ambition's past,
The Might-Have-Beens, the swarming hosts
Perishing from first to last.

Crowding my world, these spirits rise Their martyrdom to speak, Avenging fiends with fiery eyes, My shrinking self to seek.

Unworthily my hands refuse
To work for great reward,
For nature built me small to choose
The smaller man's award.

Aimless and yet in thrall I bide
With not a wish save one,
To roam in dreamland far and wide,
A journey never done.

Gathering flowers and sweets the way That wiser men passed by, Listening to songs that angels sway, So life I satisfy.

LOVE AND I

Bred in ease and wed together, Love and I have faced bad weather, Weal and woe both sang to us, Singing sad or amorous: Travelling onward both together, Love and I have faced bad weather.

Love went down the vanished distance, Youth to age in unresistance; Where he went, 'twas there went I, Neither thought to say good-bye; Bred in ease and wed together, Love and I have faced bad weather.

THE JESTER

He wore awhile
Vanity's smile
That speaks the fool in cap and bells,
And he dispensed the joy that sells
For current gold;
His mirth extolled,
Men tasted of his wine and knew

Men tasted of his wine and knew It savoured sweet of Folly's brew: Forsooth his laughing lip was loud (The tears of his world unavowed).

Day changed to night, Came sudden blight, Then half his simple wit untold, His merry quip was wan and cold,

And he that day
Was laid away,
Hid in a grave all flowerless;
But Folly, dressed in sombreness,
Laid over him all reverent
His cap and bells, his monument.

Poor mountebank, the self-made fool, Lazy Pleasure's boughten tool Of men imprisoned in themselves, The fool who into folly delves,

Heart undefiled, For wife and child.

UNFULFILLED

Not mine Life's transient heritage of peace,
Its pristine beauty passion-pure and true;
Plans unfulfilled and dark were those I knew,
The visioned promises that growing cease
When day is young and fades in quick decease,
Fades like the famished buds, the early few
Whose little blossoms die each day anew:
And yet had Love, in sweet or veiled caprice,
But promised half his rose-time faith to me,
Sharing my human loneliness in part,
(His fitful sudden passion but to be
The symbol of his wayward selfish art,)
My wistful dreams would still have been that
we,

One splendid hour, spoke softly heart to heart.

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HOW I HAVE LOVED

I, who have loved, loved man
For much of learning, much of might:
The measure of his wit outran
The fleetness of the eagle's flight,
But it was love that burned to blight.

So I have woman loved as true,
She of the whitest soul that lives,
She who pensive, sweet in rue,
Her every enemy forgives,
But 'twas not love that life outlives.

Thus I have loved a child so well,
That days seemed only fleeting hours
Lingering 'neath her winsome spell,
When Time grew naught but gentle flowers;
Soon faded this sweet love of ours.

As parents loved, I loved again,
So wise and sure the overflow
Of tenderness in hearts not vain,
In hearts of men who faith foreknow,
And yet Death changed this love to woe.

But Nature I have loved as I
Would love the soul God gave to me,
Naught in its life to crucify—
Just splendour born of liberty—
Love marvellous, love strange and free.

SLEEP ON

Sleep on, O Man of mystery, sleep! The night will shield your soul to keep Its reason both sane and well, In dreams its power to foretell.

Sleep on, O Man of mystery, sleep! Through night sweet constancy to reap And thereby dream a dream thereof, Of your first birthright—dream of love.

SAFETY-LAND

I

Troubled, I sailed Life's ocean wide and dark, Filled to the brink with pain and tyranny, And in a shallop hastened to embark To make my journey into mystery:

And naught of sailor's tongue or crafts I knew, Had not a compass near my useless hand;

Winds wilding in the rigging, on I flew,

No guide to help me understand

The shackling hungry waves that threatened me,

And some so angered that they felled me quick: I fled from pain and tyranny to be
But stranded on new shoals afraid, heart-sick,
Till, graciously God's strong and guiding hand
Steered me aright to sunny Safety-Land.

Π

In Safety-Land I rest with storms asleep, Forgetting dreary days of dark and din; Youth in my eyes that softened cannot weep, Life's glad and joyous budding hours begin; And then compelling knowledge from the least Of things transfiguring my tired life, Upon their instant vividness I feast: Then wake the luscious sweets of leaf-time, rife Enough to stir yet soothe my fired brain To something of a slowing consciousness, Wherein my hopeful prayer is not in vain, And breathing peace therefrom I solemn bless God's perfect, pliant, yet controlling hand That anchored me in Safety-Land.

DEATH

Stealing down the heavenly path
'Twixt sunshine and the midnight rain
I come for treasure that man hath
Enfolded to his heart in vain.

I'll leave him naught wherewith to buy Earth's balm he sought before I came; Courageous, bold, unthrilled or shy, To each my message is the same.

Perchance it is not pain I bring
To lay upon unwilling hearts,
But rather to allay Life's sting,
Benign to quell Love's hurt that smarts.

Let him not dread my step, for I
Will tread so still he will not know
That I have been and gone and why
I was his friend and not his foe.

THE WALTZ

'Tis soft insinuating rhythm,
That sings its subtle swinging way
Mid hearts whose unfulfilled sweet longings
Are mastered by its tender sway.

Entranced then by this mellowed music, Triumphant as it glorifies, Hearts find their mating hearts in waiting,— Waiting in Love's paradise.

YOU WHO HAVE FAILED ME

You who have failed me, failed your God;
Your feet, of conquering unaware,
Could neither climb nor pierce the sod,
Nor were they truants seeking fair
And faultless regions for sweet flower;
They only stayed and clogged the way—
Inert companions of the hour,
A bloodless service to obey.

So you forgot your dower right,
Your warrior soul's inheritance,
The law which urges you to might:
Steeped in the wan and lifeless trance,
Can you awake to seize the earth,
In sacrifice your soul to shrive,
March on to master love and mirth,
These of all heart joys to survive?

LOVE'S HEART OF ROSE

Love has a heart of scented rose
And yet a heart of thorns has he;
One favouring, the other cold,
Will each for me
Its leaf unfold?

Oh! heart of thorns and heart of rose, If wooing you would sue for me, Together you must leaf unfold, One sweet to be,

The other cold.

MY HEART'S SWEET FLOWER

In the hush of shadow-time, the hour When contented summer is at rest, Then wakes my playtime fair in flower: The playtime of my brain in quest Of little dreams and splendid dreams,—With myriad such the soft air teems.

I find the little dreams and great
In hiding with the world asleep,
Their secrets held inviolate,
Save one that could not silence keep
When in my playtime's idle hour
It sings of you, my heart's sweet flower.

VISION

'Tis prophecy, the dawn of day,
That calls the unborn year at will
Plenty or famine to fulfil.

'Tis scent of spring asleep in clay,
Its hopeful heart within the seed,
The seed beneath the ungrassed mead.

'Tis Mother pride, in meek disguise, Discerning in her babe's first hour The promise of imperial power.

'Tis love uncovering love's surprise Thereunder glimpsing primal lore, The wonderful in Nature's store.

LOVE'S DAY

There is a day whereof my song sings oft,

The day that lay between love's hope and
fear,

So long the span it seemed a saddened year; Then all earth's sweetest music was not soft Although on Heaven's wings it soared aloft, For then I came to know my first heart-tear. 'Twas love's distress, the lonely mystic seer At whose dread prophecy I once had scoffed.

I scoffed to hide the hurt of me that cried,
To hide my craven fear, I laughed aloud,
I laughed, then cried, then came the day
whereof

So oft I sing, the day with joy allied,

Then earth's sweet music was my faith
avowed

And Heaven's white wings soft wafted it to Love.

MY HEART'S DESIRE

Last night he came from No-Man's Land Borne on a cloud of silvered gold, The flower of love was in one hand, Its ever mystic tale retold.

But now a denizen of earth,
Wakened he wails as mortals may,
Or else, untaught, he smiles his mirth,
His smile the sun that floods my day.

From No-Man's Land he came to me, Came as a dream through pain's white fire, Came so a warrior to be, A monarch and my Heart's Desire.

MERE MEMORIES

Memories, mere memories,
They steal along the lonely day
That lengthens into sleepless nights:
Shadowy things that subtly play
Upon my wakened consciousness;
Just here and there a phantom face
Or gently touching hands that kiss,
And kiss as with a sweet embrace.

Forgotten music echoes low
The lullaby or Mother's prayer,
The scent of rose or violets
Intrudes upon the listless air.
Love that was sweetest enters in
The dream of summer days gone by,
While pain doth there its wail begin,
Forsooth too sad for such as I.

Lonely the day and sleepless night,
Though tears or ecstasy the gain
That memory can bring me now:
Waning, as memories ever wane,
Both glad and sad they come, so go,
These shadowy things that subtly play
Upon my wakened consciousness—
When silently they haunt my day.

JUST THEN

Who loves his solitude to be
The silence of an empty hour,
The hour as void of dreams as glee,
The hour unfilled with song or flower,
His soul is sleeping hopelessly.

Who peoples one waste hour with men
Made vivid by his dreaming power,
He mates with joy again, again,
The hour is filled with song and flower
And soul awakes just then, just then.

ON THE UPHILL ROAD

On the travelled, the winding, the long uphill road,

Is the slow dragging tread of the funeral train; To a cold looker on 'tis a day's episode,

To the silent one mourner a passage of pain.

Deep the swathing that hides from the world his worst woe,

Gay the roses that smother the wan woman's face,

While the long uphill road is o'erlaid with pure snow

And the evergreens grow on the burial place.

And the light of the day
Warms the evergreen bed
Where they place her away,
The dear loved one called dead.

In the sun's glistening glow,
The red roses stay red
On the bed of white snow
Where they lay her just dead.

Strange the wrappings of his inarticulate woe, And as alien the rose that a guard o'er her keeps,

But immortal the faith whose one bloom must o'ergrow

Sweet fulfilled, on the still and white bed where she sleeps.

A GREY DAY

A grey day greys the more when Grief Is draped in shadows danger-deep, Hurt to the heart by hurt belief, Wonted to woes that never sleep.

But greyest days can gladden when Grief's danger-deeps have lightened so That hope re-enters vanquished men, Inspiring love while deadening woe.

Oh! grey day, all too grey for me,
I choose you when you change to rose,
Your hurt heart healed as mine must be
Warm with the glow that joy bestows.

FRIVOLOUS BETTY

She was winsome and fair in her features
This dear Betty, whose amber green eyes
Called, "But follow me following pleasure,"
Then I went with her, wise or unwise.

She went forth into sunshine well faring,
And she skirted the meadows' green ways:
To the lilt of the robin she listened,
As it sang its sweet spring roundelays.

Yes, I followed this frivolous Betty, In a gambol and dance on the lea, Where we found a wee nestling just fallen From his weather-torn nest in the tree.

And this Betty—Ah! how can I tell it,
How she sprang at her victim, while I
Either wise or unwise in my fealty,
Neither stayed her not did I outcry.

But why should I, a reasoning creature, Have halted her catching her prey? She was frivolous Betty, my kitten, Seeking pleasure in nature's own way.

CUPID

With Cupid in the foreground And Norah at his side, And I her closest neighbour, How could Cupid be defied?

For fear he might be flouted, With Norah was he shy, But Cupid fixed me quaking, By the flashing of his eye.

He pierced me with his arrow And Norah kissed the wound, And I kissed Norah, kissing While dear Cupid never frowned.

THE MASTER MUSICIAN

My art knows one illusive hour of praise,
Supreme if incomplete, for this more sweet,
Having no counterpart in other days,
Save in a dream its twin-born I may meet.

The peoples' god, I love my man's life more, Unhaunted by regret, my eyes incline To unknown quiet years with joy in store, Fairer than this of fame's that now is mine.

SLEEPING NIGHT

Life vanishes in sleeping night, His dreams therein a mute delight, And beggared Love finds shelter there In sacred tryst his hopes to bare.

Time only steals night's dreams away, Taken from silence to the day, Whereto Love, Life, and Hope return, Never again for night to yearn.

Though, gained the world's accustomed place, Never again night's dreams to grace, Love, Life and Hope there learned how sleep Inviolate could secrets keep.

LOVE'S SHARE

Impetuous and debonair,
Love importuned me for a share
Of all my days and half my heart:
With artless ardour I gave this,
Then Love, deceiver that he is,
Desired what I withheld in part:
So with a sweet, persuasive look,
The half I did not give he took,
Thus vanquishing my life, my heart.

LIFE

Loud I knocked at the door of Heaven's portals, Found it closed and thus closed it remained; For unheralded Death it was opened, Death in cerements stained or unstained.

MY GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK

- I was warned of the wasting, the wandering midnight
 - By the muffled repeat of the tick-tack tock
 - Of the querulous voice of my grandfather's clock:
- At the sound of his sighing rose fluttering spectres,
 - Allured by the changing but changeless tick tock
 - Of the wise winning soul of my grandfather's clock.
- And they came first avenging for overspent passions,
 - All too wearily worn to the tick-tack tock
 - Of the minor set tunes of my grandfather's clock,
- But near in the moonlight soft hovered fair spirits
 - Who plaintively sang to the tick-tack tock
 - Of the unceasing rhythm of my grandfather's clock.

154 My Grandfather's Clock

Then increasingly fair were the dreams of my dreaming

That in wavering hushed with the tick-tack tock

Of the slowing heartbeat of my grandfather's clock,

And these dreams were they born of illusion or glory

Faded gently at day when the tick-tack tock Sighing stopped, the soul fled from my grandfather's clock.

WARFARE

Victor of men unvanquished
Till trumpeted I came,
They fell at my stern bidding,
Were conquered without shame.

Alas, that I must enter
The realms of brotherhood,
The vaunted pose of friendship
So falls in my dread mood.

FAREWELL

Farewell to life's too pleasant things, To the brook unconscious that it sings; To aspiring trees whose promised fruit Drinks sweets upwelling from the root; To the hills whose heights are dripping dew, For fevered days to sip anew.

Farewell to song that sings a smile, To honour stripping fame from guile: Farewell to life's beseeching hours, To justice leading shame to flowers The whitest for her hand to pick; To faith who weds with men heartsick.

Farewell to morn whose silent grace Wakes limitless in roseate space; To noon who fires thought with glow, To twilight where wan day dreams grow: Farewell to great and gladsome days, To hope fulfilled that perfect stays.

Farewell! The word drags on and on As wearily I dwell upon
Love with sweet face and ardent eyes,
Eyes yearning for self-sacrifice;
Farewell with this my one last breath,
My triumph—finding Heaven in death.

THE COQUETTE

On the ledge outside my window Two little wrens came near, And their chatter was but gossip The latest one could hear.

In the flutter of flirtation
Said one, a gay coquette,
"Today I love a lover
Tomorrow to forget."

The bolder one her suitor,

He shook his head and said,
"Good-by my little sweetheart,
I'll seek another maid,—

"A wren who' not forgetting Her lover of today, Will be my bride tomorrow, In constancy to stay."

TODAY AND TOMORROW

Who needs to juggle with Tomorrow, Taking hazards on its face, Whether to glee or sorrow, Let each day have its perfect place.

Who needs to tarry with the sadness
That overwhelmed the Yesterday?
When splendid is Today's great gladness,—
Just ask the fleeting day to stay.

To stay till we can hoard its laughter And keep its fair enchantment still, And pile up joys to spend hereafter, The treasures lavished when we will.

AN AFTERNOON TEA

The prim grasshoppers sat in grave council, There was one and Dame Fashion was she, Who remarked in her answer to question, "Let us give this one afternoon tea."

They invited their kin and the families
Of thin spiders and honey-rich bees,
A beetle or two not so purse proud
And wee ants who were poorer than these.

Dressed in gowns that would dazzle the humble, With an eyeglass and cane for the fop, They soon gathered in crowds in a bower, With green vines overhung at the top.

The viands were spread on a moss bank,
One the clover leaf sandwich could see,
And round cakes that were frosted white daisies,
While gay buttercups held the spiced tea.

But unversed in the code of the worldlings,—
That each guest should of dainties partake
But a sip of the tea sweetly sugared,
Just a nibble of daisy white cake,—

160 An Afternoon Tea

They all rushed at the feast in a body, Like the locusts that ravish earth's way, And quick gobbled the least and last goody, Satisfied with their brief holiday.

LOCK AND KEY

Who thinks that he can buy with gold A lock and key to guard the soul, Is he who would sweet songs enfold Humanly held in his control.

As well to shackle scent of rose Or perfumes of the sea hold fast, Or summer's blossom drifts enclose In gaols of safety unsurpassed.

So laughter he would like to keep
Despoiled of wingéd liberty,
Keep spirits of our dreams asleep,
Shut in his gaol with lock and key.

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OF SCANTY ERUDITION

Of scanty erudition
And primitive was she,
But sweet her disposition
As charming as could be.

Her eyes were prepossessing,
Her comprehending sense
Had one way of expressing
Its mystic eloquence—

Her witching ways persisting
Till I, in love with her,
Only near her was existing,
My heartbeats quick astir.

My soul was in her keeping,
She's the prettiest thing e'er seen,
Awake or when in sleeping,
Of fascinating mien.

Awake she was capricious,

To smiles and tears so born,

Her every way deiicious,

Grown sweeter with each morn.

And though she lacked book-learning
She knew love's richest lore,
The lore I learned in yearning
For the baby I adore.

THE OLD ACTOR

Withered in trunk and limb am I, Aged in heart and worldly wise, No fire in my soul or lips, No glint of summer in my eyes.

And yet am I a stalwart thing,

The brawny brain of me not dead,
For I can wring the tears from stones

And I bleed hearts that never bled.

For though I tremble I can feign
What once I was in potent youth,
The soul of me is not pretence,
Nor yet in art am I uncouth.

The faded tones of me are true, Yet to the siren calls of men Whose idol once I was, I'm young, Bowing to plaudits once again.

FROM THE AGES TO THE NOW

Oh! Time, what gifts are in your keeping From the Ages to the Now? Slumber for stars fore'er unsleeping? Nodding for hills that never bow!

Have you something in your keeping To enhance life's smiling eyes? From Ages to the Now unsleeping, A gift the sceptics to surprise?

Oh! Time, of gifts within your keeping
Is there one that I could find
That from the Now may not be sleeping,
Life's music in my human mind?

WAYFARERS

Wayfarers on the city streets,
Virile and footsore on they go,
Fleeing for life or marching to woe
While each from love a mate entreats;
Wayfarers tempered to summer's mood,
Won to the world, yet never wooed.

Questioning nor answering not,
Wayfarers on and on they go,
Marching in quick step, marching slow;
Sinning and sorrow once forgot,
Knowledge to get and love to gain,
Wayfarers marching not in vain.

DEAR LOVE

Love, dear Love in charity Buy of me my pretty wares, The kiss that every lover dares, The charm that with desire glows, The marvels that my garden grows, Sweet-hearted rue and rosemary.

Love, dear Love in charity Buy of me my precious wares, The golden circlets forged in pairs, The opal that a storm foreknows; Oh! pay the price a queen bestows For sweetest rue and rosemary.

Love, dear Love in charity
Buy of me my fading wares,
So buy the wheat I tore from tares
And buy my sacrificial woes,
Pay me the joy that pity owes,
Buying sweet rue and rosemary.

LIFE'S TRINITY

I of earth have walked the million leagues
That stretch from oceans to volcanic seas,
Searching for Truth untrammelled with intrigues,

Truth, Grace and Power, Life's trinity in these.

I of heaven have swept the peopled skies
That cover all the world's encircling space,
Searching for Truth that Honour satisfies,
Life's trinity to find in Power, Truth and
Grace.

RATHER TO STORMS

Rather to storms I bared my breast,
Than with the leaf and flower to stay,
Emotionless and still to rest,
The insignificant dull day.

Far rather I would phantoms chase
And fail in this one tearful task,
Than dreamless idleness to face,
Or in sudden golden gleams to bask.

So rather I would fight to win, To work, prevailing if I could, Or else God's woof of dreams to spin And live in this one regnant mood.

GREAT HEART

Oh! Great Heart of the merry times,
When love's desire was sung in rhymes,
The troubadour the tune to play:
When doughty deeds were fought with darts,
If resurrected now, what arts
And weapons would you use today
A warrior to kill and slay?

Would song be sung to sweet lute strings,
The song of soft and gladsome things
Or, swept away love's fair desire—
The lust of passion in full sway,
To cannonading would you play,
And fight to kill with quick gunfire—
The trumpet call your song to inspire?

NEW LIFE

Smitten with silence is the snow, Burdened with ghostly secrecy, A spectre till the sun's warm glow Loosens, in tears, its mystery.

INSOMNIA

Alone and sleepless in the crowding dark, To all its haunting wails I, trembling, hark, As no interpreter is there to say That they are prophets of the coming day.

Some of joy's vanished dreams return to sing, Life's fair and momentary calm to bring, Remembered love once lays its peace on me, But from the noise of night I am not free.

Such queer and surging things ring through the air,

The quarrelling winds that would a prey ensare,

The restlessness among the stars sounds clear, The tumult of my thoughts I, even, hear.

Oh, Sleep, why wait a single hour to say, That you will drive the clamouring night away, And leave me to the dark that safe will hold Me dreaming till the wings of day unfold.

A SUNBEAM TO THE FERN

Oh, child of the patient forest,

Thy tenderest breath is my balm,

As I follow thy feet through wood-tangles,

Through the leaf-buried mosses, through
calm.

I follow and haste to o'ertake thee,
I appeal to thy shadow-hid heart,
Hide not in new haunts, nor outrun me,
In your beauty my love has a part.

SNOWFLAKES

Winged as the day is,
Silent as swift,
Myriad snowflakes
Falter then drift:
Falter as thoughts might,
Drift as the sands,
When run through the fingers
Of soft fondling hands.

Winged as the day is,
Who follows their lead?
Who, loving them, stays them,
Swift in their speed?
Who steadies these children
From dizzy heights whirled,
Not one in a conflict
As they fall to our world?

THE OPAL

Morning weaves a golden net
Over your heart of snow,
But curtains it with violet
To shade the telltale glow.

Then Noon in cunning jealousy
Sets snares to lure the rose
To flash her golden sovereignty
Where red your life blood flows.

In ecstasy the Twilight weaves
A net to hide the gold,
Its green, the green of lakeside leaves,
Kissing you fold on fold.

Your jailers they, Morn, Noon, Twilight, Who keep you prisoned here, Your flaming heart of earth's delight, Your soul of Heaven's white sphere.

ECHOES

Echoes, echoes, kiss then part, One a dream, a memory one. And on my sheltered beating heart Their unremitting race is run.

Echoes, echoes, kiss then part, Unsilenced in their soundings save, The dream, the memory and the heart Lie unaware and in one grave.

WEDDED

From hill and hill two streams are flowing, Each springing from the mountain's heart; And down the valley, life bestowing, They journey on, each one apart.

Till, suddenly, in swift surrender,
They yield their separate ways and meet
In single course, a forest splendour,
Both wonder-fraught and wondrous fleet.

In stricken Summer's arid weather, No stream allays her thirst or strife But, mountain-fed, two streams together, Freshen the earth as love does life.

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SOUL AND SONG

Allured from paradise, the breath
Of Morning woke and sweet as strong
Kissed wan, consenting space to fill
Its emptiness with soul and song.

PHOSPHORESCENCE

Suddenly breaking, the unaware mist Drops a star where the night-shadow kissed,

Kissed the sea.

Can it be

That it falls to a grave

(The encompassing wave),

There to brighten its lustreless dark?

Fair as gold,

Just as cold,

Falls a spark?

The foam billows it kissed,

Green, rose, amethyst,

Then like to deep crimson the glow, As restless as longing, alluring its might; 'Tis a promise to mermen, a torch, wonderlight From dusk to the dawn 'tis a pilot full bold, 'Tis the glint of Heaven's glory we mortals can

hold

In one hand, 'neath a wavelet in flow.

TRANSFIGURED

Kissing the sea, a snowflake dies, Clad in a shroud, a pearl it lies, A new-born soul its heaven begun.

A snowflake dies, by sunshine kissed, Falling a tear, a pearl in mist,
A vanished soul, its heaven won.

THE SEA

As old in wisdom as in reign, A sweet serenity I feign, For I must murder if I toil And take a friendly life for spoil.

I feign—then passion heat is white, With savage arms the earth I smite. The heartbeats of the world I hear, Each throb the wilder for its fear.

Then o'er dead beauty I am borne, Unrest of cruelty is shorn, And quick the smile of one fair hour Awakes from wreckage, laughter, flower.

A BROKEN PROMISE

The sleepy sun once said good-night,
A farewell lingering and sweet;
I heard his message to the world,
"Tomorrow we shall smiling meet."

But broken was his promise fair
For long it was before they met;
Dark days of weeping and despair
Made each the other quite forget.

VISTAS

Dusk is the leaden mist that flows
Through tawny hours beyond our sight,
Veiling the vistas, vision-fraught,
Where loved and lost ones reunite.

THE STARS

Looking over hill and heather, Looking over drift and haze, Looking where the tempests gather, Straight into the stars we gaze,

Dazzling in their far off splendour; Sovereigns are they, old or new? Subjects are they, cruel, tender? Children are they, fickle, true?

Would they mate with joy or sorrow, Learn to love and faithful grow? Are they alien to the morrow, And their own death can they foreknow?

Ranging over desolation,
Ranging over leagues of change,
Have they journeyed since creation?
Are they friendly, are they strange?

Heaven is girdled with their glory
And the smiling of their eyes
Tells to the world the simple story
Of the angels' paradise.

THE GARDEN OF DEATH

Touching the waste in the kindness
That Nature conveys to the old,
The Seasons o'erlay the bare tombstones
With protecting snow-mantles, sun-gold.

They overgrow graves with sweet wilderness, Interposing the flower or leaf, Then peril and death are forgotten, For gladness o'ercovers Love's grief.

THE WORLD RUNS AWAY

Hark, the world runs away! Overrolling it goes (And the sun overthrows), Over-zealous, astray.

The world runs away,
Startling nights till they wake,
Coaxing moons to forsake
Heaven's haunts for mere play.

Hark, the world runs away! Topsy-turvy the stars, As leaping it jars, Is it drunken or gay?

The world runs away!

To the morrow it goes

And spent with heart throes,

There to rest for a day.

GOD'S LULLABY

Thrilled is the nebulous twilight
When the tremulous zephyr floats by,
The wind that is Heaven's first breathing,
Its loitering, exquisite sigh.

Still is the once troubled gloaming
When the unsustained melodies die,
When, fallen in dreams, dreams of angels,
We sleep to God's sweet lullaby.

THE PRINCESS OF SUMMER

Laden with self-ensnared plunder, The surfeit on wings to be seen, The bee is a princess of summer Of myriad blossoms the queen.

For roses, the wonder of waysides,
Have paid her in tithes of pure gold,
Twice yielding her money in dewdrops,
Which the generous petals uphold.

Of silver there's never too little

For this tyrant to steal from pale flowers,
Lily-flowers who, wan as the moonbeams,

Are swooning in overwarm hours.

No sombre dressed flower escapeth
Paying toll in the sugary coin,
Which is booty to greedy bee-sovereigns,
Who even from paupers purloin.

A jovial princess of summer
And the cleverest thief is the bee,
For despoiling June's kingdom of silver
As of gold hath she honey in fee.

RIVERS AND ROBINS

Who dares confess to loneliness
When the clay is filled with insect life,
When the rivers swish, when all the world
Is with happy, winged creation rife,
When the channelled earth breaks out in noise
In the forest lutes to sing its joys?

If overhead and underfoot
Are myriad melodies astir,
If rivers and the robins praise,
Soul-peace in song to minister,
Then, Love apart, these comrades left,
Who could of friends be all bereft?

WHERE SWEET IS REST

The tiny elves are dwelling
In gardens where the bush
Changes from white in moonbeams,
To red in noontime's flush.

There butterflies are brooding And bees are half asleep, Proud poppies and pale pansies Their patient vigil keep.

The earth is sweet with balsam, With petunias that stray Entangled in the iris, Fair guardian of the way.

And here a lone sundial
Spells time and counts the hours,
By slow and pleasant shadows,
Fallen first amidst the flowers.

There ask and songs will answer In lullabies low heard, The winds in happy whispers, A crooning mother bird.

A trembling tree that straightens,
A melody confessed,
In all the place low music,
Soothing where sweet is rest.

NATURE'S MELODIES

In the swinging of the scythe,
In the cricket's tune so blithe,
The soft and minor melodies abound;
While the surgings of the sea,
That are restless, wild in glee,
Wake cadences and harmonies profound.

All unmuffled notes and free
These new melodies must be,
Voicing symphonies that softly blend.
Thus the whispers of the lea
And the booming of the sea
Are married in the songs that never end.

NATURE'S BEST

Beguiled by every simple thing
That rooted grows,
Or blooming glows,
(The road betrayed by birds on wing,
By flashing gleams
And friendly streams),
I follow, treasures home to bring
Of Nature's best
And loveliest.

THE JUNE RAIN

It runs along the verdant ways,
And sweeps an unused tangled path,
For all the folk who haunt the May,
For every sprite the June-time hath.

They listen to the drip on drip
Whose singing has a silvered tongue,
They catch the raindrops lip to lip,
In revelry the flowers among.

As merrily they play and dance, The nodding grasses sway in tune, The rhythmic raindrops but enhance The music of the May and June.

A BIRD OUT OF THE NEST

Strange to liberty I wait
For many days to pass, ere I
Can cry, "All's well," and then elate
Swift with the early winds to fly;

Swift with the winds to fly and dare
To graze a danger as in play,
To cry, "All's well," though storms be there,
My freedom gained in one glad day.

THE RAIN

Swift fall the rushing raindrops
When Spring has called them here,
To flood the earth full measure
And bring the flower-days near.

And soft they fall when summer Sips first the filling wells, That Autumn shall have dower, Of blossoms this foretells.

When Winter would be quaffing Sweet drink, the rain is shy, The wind-blown year is sterile, Grim frozen is the sky.

THE MOON

Soul of the summer night, the moon Sleeps in the arms of afternoon, Sleeps in the over-purpling haze, Ready to light earth's darkest ways, When the day is done, And when one by one, Voices of land and sea are dead.

Soul of the summer night, the moon
Silvers the silences of June;
Dimmest of tearful eyes than see,
See ghosts that haunt the flowered lea,
Then the hurt hearts hear,
And fair heaven is near,
June's in the night, earth's griefs are fled.

GLAD HEART OF ME

The falling blossoms of the May Take flight and sail across the day, A cool white cloud against the sky, Then glad the heart of me, I cry.

Soft kissing sighs the woods forsake And skimming leas new life intake; Then all the breathing world is sweet, Glad heart of me—the May I greet.

Then Love comes early, coming fair, And who to cross his mood would dare? Not I, all mine the magic May, Glad heart of me,—I seek Love's sway.

WANTON WEATHER

With hearts attuned to gracious spring In shading tree-tops birds, a-wing, Sweet sing And say, Which way Is wanton weather, which way still? Will wanton weather hurt or kill?

The wanton weather Is where the heather, Is where the young, affrighted grass, And where the mating lovers pass.

With hearts attuned to frowning spring In far-off tree-tops birds, a-wing, Still sing And say Which way
The wanton weather, what care we—Though storms are rife we yet are free.

Naught can stay
Our roundelay,
Nor stifling hinder our long flight,
Naught save the deep obscuring night.

EARTH CHANGED TO PARADISE

The Spring but sips the dewdrops
And splendour is in reign
The colour-riot golden,
Sweet sound the one refrain.

Then bathed by wanton tempests
That gathered in one night,
Spring still reveals new marvels
That charm the sense, the sight.

Is Spring the one creator
Whose soul is born of tears,
Whose self revives in glory
From desolating years?

Who else could gather memories
Turned grey by tearful eyes,
And nurse them till their sunshine
Changes earth to paradise?

NATURE

So sweet her poise, so wise her ways
That she but hoards her happy days:
No single one of this fair time
The day that you and I would waste
In spoiling reason or a rhyme
By overheat or overwaste:
She hoards them so true joys endure
In the mellowed magic of her lure.

YEARNING

In desolate far loneliness,
A Fir-tree calls for love to come
And friendly be, to comfort, bless
And find within her arms a home.

A robin hears the plaintive cry,
And summoning his mate, his kin,
An autocrat, he bids them fly,
And haste the moving to begin.

He bids them lay their nesting young
Within the Fir-tree's yearning arms;
Then chattering in mystic tongue,
They rest there safe from earth's alarms.

And thus the Fir-tree truly mates
With sweet and longed-for happiness;
Love called, will come for love creates
Friends who comfort, cheer and bless.

ALMOST

The gardener saves the Rose he crushed,
Though crushed her wings till almost stilled;
The throbbing heart is almost hushed,
Crippling the soul he almost killed.
He saves the Rose who almost dies
Reproaching him with sad hurt eyes.

The gardener saves the Rose and holds
Her dearer for her broken wings,
In sheltering love her heart enfolds
As to her fainting soul he clings;
Clings closer for the poor hurt eyes
Reproaching still in sad surprise.

EARLY MORNING

Not knowing any other way,
I come and from long silence fly
From outer darkness to the day,
The flight in summer mood, a sigh.

In still content my spirit falls
Upon a sleeping, dreaming earth;
In one sweet note a love-bird calls
A welcome to my solemn birth.

And wide the path that I must cross— Where all the world is sweet in flower, Where hearts are gay, where life is loss, These each I kiss in my brief hour.

Not knowing any other way,
And but a wanderer since birth,
Unasked, unthanked, I come to lay
A fair and fearless smile on earth.

BETRAYED

In silence was the dreaming night betrayed,
'Twas when the stars were courting sweet the
moon:

Each satellite a quick obeisance made,
Then slipped away soft-shod in silvered shoon.

The love of which moon's beauty wove the lure
But faded near the heart that blazoned light
And, loyal once again, the stars sought sure—
The slumberous and siren arms of night.

DANCING

In spring's early rushing wind
The tendrils of the vine
Sway merrily,
Sing cheerily;
In the vexing wind, unkind,
The little tendrils pine,
Sigh wearily,
Die drearily.

But the summer wind
Is kind,
And merrily it plays,
So cheerily it sways
The little leaving trees,
Quick dancing in the breeze.

And this tuneful wind
Is kind,
Sets to a dancing beat
The nodding flowers sweet,
Sets dancing wistful trees
To the music of the breeze.

So 'tis ever kind,
This wind,
For it keeps the world of flowers
In a dancing mood for hours,
Keeps the happy trees soft sighing,
With the dancing wind undying.

BIRDS

Travellers on-winging and far flying they,
Over and over the world's weeping way;
Skimming the ocean's ensnaring long arm,
Circling the meadow, the woodland, the farm,
Illusive and never in nesting to stay—
Revellers calling their fellows to play,
Squandering joys in bewildering waste,
Love and adventure wild-longing to taste.

Promising laughter in rhythmic refrain,
Trilling surpassingly through the cold rain,
Filling the solitude's vastness with song,
Dwelling wherever the world-sirens throng.
Satisfied wanderers, fondest of dawn
Yet following shadows, the sunlight withdrawn,
Under the drowsy old moon fall asleep,
In dreamland new songs and new wonders to
reap.

MASQUERADING

A moonbeam masquerades a bit
And plays the silly harlequin,
And posing for a flirt, a wit,
Coquets with maids, the woods within.

A haughty posture takes, then speeds
His frisking feet so far, so fast
He stumbles 'mid the tangled reeds,
Thus in obscurity is cast.

Night spreads her shadows over him,
This fellow who would have his fling,
His misty glory now is dim,—
He sought but pranks and pleasuring.

THE NIGHTINGALE

While summer harkens back to snow—Remoter moods than I can know, I'm rocking in the leafy trees
The harmonies of earth to seize,
These learning, blend them in one tune,
Pæan of joy, glad song to June.

THE PEACOCK

Enamoured of himself, in proud estate And amorous, in sense elate, He struts a-nigh a bramble fence, Vain, in lone magnificence.

Just over there 'mid flowers a-bloom, In waiting lies his unguessed doom.

A love-call sends his flying feet His gracious kissing mate to meet, But as he would his joy dispense, He stumbles on the bramble fence.

His wings all torn and bruised his pride, Must he there await his wailing bride.

FALLEN LEAVES

Dear truants fled from Safety-land,
The leaves adrift,
The Autumn's gift
Soft fallen to my loving hand:
With draggled wings,
The plaintive things,
As captives, laid there satisfied:
I loved them so,
Hearts beating slow,
Ere lost from Safety-land they died.

WANTED

The mating star, he sought his heart's desire And sought it by the moon's revealing fire;

> His wings unfurled, Around the world

He went, not measuring the circling way;

He chose to go, In flight so slow,

That round he went till lost in one white day.

You swains, take heed
Your race to speed
If you would overtake your heart's desire
And keep your love in Life's quick burning fire.

THE CLOUD

Whoso is sure, more sure than I Of solitude, high must he fly—

Must have a care

For Heaven's great glare, Yet fear earth's mystery the more; The lightning flash that goes before

The thunderbolt,

Day's quick revolt

From too much petting of the sun: And he must run from storms begun,

The devil in The race to win.

Whoso is more than I, but sure That earth's long solitudes endure,

Is but a fool,
The witless tool
Of tempests playing in the wild,
But, kin to me, he's Nature's child.

THE WILLOWS

By zephyrs swung and rocked are we Over the brooding grass asleep, Spreading our wings all tenderly Over the fairies watch to keep.

Gladdest of guardians, dear of heart, Saving the nests of roving years, Kissing the frightened birds that dart Through the dew shadows, wet with tears.

Fairest of havens, safe and true,
Shelter to sheep of warm fleece shorn,
Shield to a comrade, such as you,
Friend to a foe, if spent and worn.

BLOSSOM-SUITORS

In locking arms for safety's sake,

The pear and cherry trees are wed;
Think you, birds, who brown nests make
Where leafy branches overspread,
That you, and only you, are there,
Innocent and debonair?

Gallants there are who soon espy
You laughing, as they come too near,
Too near the place where you defy
These suitors of the blossomed year;—
These butterflies and hungered bees,
Who with you share the flowered trees.

THE HEART OF THE WORLD

In the heart of the world
Is the flame of gold;
'Tis in petals unfurled,
'Tis in leaf in fold.

In earth's chalice of rose
Is the red of wine;
Through the morning it flows
And its heart is mine.

In the heart of a maid
Is the flame of gold;
'Tis her smile sweet betrayed,
'Tis her secret told

In her chalice of rose
Is the red of wine,
Through my soul quick it flows—
And Love's heart is mine.

THE RAINBOW

Red of reds, the rainbow's heart,
Orange flames in fire apart,
Yellow's smile turns tears to gold,
Green the herald of Spring's fold,
Blue unites the morn and night
Indigo's dark bloom despite,
Violet, the loving thing,
In harmony rain-tears to bring.

Rainbow in the heaven caught,

Of your gold is gold unbought,

Yours the sweet untroubled face

Given in promise of God's grace,

By your sign that men may know

In earth's dark that no floods flow:

Vain,—to storms unreconciled,

Of rain you are the one sun-child.

HEAT LIGHTNING

Through all the world a cloud I ride, A cloud the chariot I guide, With wingéd steeds of fire and flame, And, into safety, drive them, tame.

IN ARCADIE

While walking in the wake of May,
The underthrust of grass I feel
If chance I stoop or humbly kneel
To drink the honey-dews that stay
Upon the lips of daffodils:
The drink is spicéd warm and thrills
My soul with Springtime and her lure,
I wonder will her dreams endure,—

The dreams unbosomed by the May
Who smiles when mellowed morn is near,
When brooding clouds withhold the tear,
In shadow days or days of play
Her heart brews nectar golden sweet,
Her breast the open safe retreat
For any wounded, wingéd thing,
The too quick harbinger of spring.

With all too hostile winds at bay,
May dips her vernal wing to shield
And feather green the barren field.
Then as her perfume scents the way,
To heaven-cloistered Arcadie,
The mistress of my soul to be,
I'll follow Springtime and her lure
And dwell where siren-dreams endure.

SONG TO A SONG

Swift from the sobbing sea a song is sung, Singing its way the cooing birds among—Sung in sweet tongue.

Quick from my heart to you a throb is sent, Fluttering soft with siren-music blent, Song in song spent.

Song of the sea is still, with birds asleep, Song of the heart its melody will keep, Though the world weep.

Song to a song, with Love to sing the tune, Heart to a heart with saddened worlds a-swoon, This is Life's boon.

EVERYWHERE AND NOWHERE

Won by sunshine, I must follow
The summer's road that leads
To Everywhere and Nowhere,
The road where naught impedes
My progress to the highlands
Whose peaks are crowned with gold,
The road that leads to lowlands,
With mortals in the fold.

Won by sunshine, I must follow
The road that wends its way
To Everywhere and Nowhere,
Beyond the dauntless day:
Risen to heights transcendent
I pierce Heaven's blue and see
Visions of dear immortals
Starring Eternity.

SWEET SILENCES

Night lays its dark upon the world, Then dreams awake with wings unfurled, Drifting adown the quiet way Their first caress on love to lay.

Sweet silences wherein we brood, No fitful glamour in the mood, But just a patient hope to rest Upon the earth's unravaged breast.

Then dreams enfold their wings to keep A shelter safe for those asleep, Assuaging pain if such there be In life and love's deep mystery.

THE BROOK

Have you caught the pure heart of the mountain And the fleeting white soul of the wood? Caught the spirits that dwell in the forests, Caught the laggards who pleading withstood?

Have you held them as one on your bosom, On your sparkling and sheltering breast? There, luring the leaf and young flower, Of what sweeter thing now is your quest?

Do these spirits seem fugitive children
That endeared live again in your life?
Your companions in highways and byways
Hand in hand in your struggle and strife?

The strife to encompass the journey
Into wonderland then to the sea?
Little Brook, if desiring new friendships,
Many mortals your conquests would be.

Then with you would travel forgetting
That they die in the rustling onrush
To the grasping and once restless ocean
Slow and sleeping in midsummer's hush.

SPIRITS OF THE WOODLANDS

Plumaged red,
Brown o'erspread,
Sweet spirits of the woodlands;
He and she,
Songsters free,
They roam where I may never;
Vagrant wings,
Little things,

They vanish 'neath the skylands.

Of earth I, Till I die,

I may not haunt the woodlands,

I must die Ere I fly

My wings the clouds to sever.

I must fly Ere my sigh

Can pierce the dark veiled skylands.

Vagrant wings, Little things, Sweet spirits of the woodlands;

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226 Spirits of the Woodlands

Songsters free,
Together we,
Some day and then for ever,
On may fly,
Far on high
In quest of hidden skylands.

WANDERLUST

Following the call of the siren,
Filled with wanderlust just in one day,
The wee snowdrops left kin and the homeland
So to seek a new world far away.

Not a tear was there shed at the parting
From their neighbours, the century old,
With a whizz and a whirr and with rapture
They but scurried and rushed from the fold.

In the struggle they fell in a hurry
And fast covered the city and field,
Hiding white the far crag and the valley,
Till the grime of each one was concealed.

But afraid of the world and its offspring
And of all that its warfare portends,
In the journey was wanderlust sated,
So soon homesick they cried for old friends.

Then too late came the pitiful longing,
As they wept that on earth they must stay
For so brief was the unwilling sojourn
That they died as they came, in one day.

THE SERAPH

God gave the bird his song to bring
The quiet day to early life,
Then gave the day a voice to sing
To stir the world to noise and strife.
God gave the seraph song that he
In ranging o'er the noise of day
Could master of all songsters be,
And with his soul the erring sway.

The bird, the day, the seraph sing In melodies that vibrant ring, Echoes of Heaven on earth to bring.

THE WORLD'S ECHO

His sponsor once forsaken,
The dauntless echo falls
'Twixt harmony and hades;
Persistently he calls
To all the ruling spirits
Of peopled worlds to hear
His early proclamation
Though distant, sounding clear.

His sponsor was the old year,
A sacrifice to storms
And torn and tried by old loves
The echo with him mourns,
Yet sternly issues mandates
To the innocent New Year,
To face world-tides and tempests,
A sturdy pioneer.

ALL TREMULOUS WITH TEARS

Earth calls the Day, all tremulous with tears And bids her lay her misery and fears Upon the new and swift encroaching years;

To lay the burden there,
Forgotten as a care,
But spoken as a prayer,
A prayer for skies where love the shadow clears

Of sorrow unaware.

FASCINATING FANNIE

I strove my best to guard and please her,
This maiden born of sunny climes,
Sportive at first I tried to tease her,
And then to teach at different times
The latest word or silly notion,
Now taught in any modern school;
'Twas learned but learned with much commotion
And for my pains she dubbed me fool.

Then if she roamed, 'twas in a flutter,
When hobbling in ungainly haste,
And when she talked, it was to splutter
Some epithets not to my taste.
One day she called, "I faint, come fan me,"
Yet shrieked it with a piercing yell,
This wayward fascinating Fannie,
The taunting parrot you know well.

NATURE

Sleepless guardian of my fold,
Feeblest on my breast I hold,
Mightiest I keep at bay:
Ancestors nor kin have I
Battling for supremacy—
Born Creator, worlds I sway.

DRIFTS AND DRIFTS

Like clouds that nestle in the valleys
In safe enclosing arms to rest,
Are drifts and drifts of leaves down falling,
Unbidden guests on earth to nest.

Like little flocks of birds home flitting
Of tender mothering in quest,
Are drifts and drifts of songs far winging
To sink at last in Love's fair breast.

If one among them soft is singing
Its heart appeal made manifest,
Of drifts and drifts of dreams beguiling,
Oh Love, keep mine the nearest, best.

DEWDROPS

Unwilling in their earthward flight, Soft fall the shadow-tears of night, Impaled on blades of grass they stay, Cool witnesses to watch the day.

Alas! that tears of bleeding night Pass on in still and willing flight, Not e'en their ghosts be left to stay, Waiting to watch another day.

THE CARDINAL BIRD

Red throated and his breast aflame,
A wanderer down winter's way,
He traced the thin white road with shame
Because, was stilled his roundelay,
For worn of heart and worn of wing
He could not, could not sweetly sing.

He could not sing that tired day,
His scarlet wing so weak and worn,
His heart snow-withered on the way,
His spirit sinking and forlorn,
But once he heard the call of spring,
He could not wait his song to sing.

WAITING

The tree long waited for the leaf
That fashioned her a splendid dress,
To hide her heart so none could guess
That in it lay a spoiling grief.

So life waits long as waits the tree, For grace to fashion her the dress, To clothe her heart with loveliness So none its carking pain can see.

THE MOUNTAIN STREAM

I am long in the land where unbidden, Unchidden,

I am leading, yet led, where I follow The hollow,

And I venture the way once in hushing, Then rushing,

Till soon in the forest, in finding Its winding,

I am whirled mid the rocks in a dashing And splashing,

That is ending my day as a bubble In trouble.

THE FOREST

In the vastness of great shadow
Is the forest half asleep,
Till the dawn wakes up the silence
And is stirring winds to keep
All the little leaves a-rustling
All the little brooks a-hustling
While the sky is blue and keep.

Would you keep the woods in shadow
Or keep the sun in glow,
Would you have the forest quiet
Or the winds that, rustling, blow
All the leaves, till set a-nodding,
And the brooks alive and throbbing
With no quiver in them slow?

I would have the world in shadow,
So that there I'd dream by day,
Then I'd have it swift and glowing,
Thus to see the winds at play.
I would have the winds a-sleeping,
Then I'd have them watchful keeping,
Both dreams and shadows well away.

THE EARTH

The wind, the sea, the sun, the moon, the star Alike my teachers and my servants are.

So I, the monarch, menial none the less,
But nurture them as so they nurture me.

Yet beings of no stunted littleness,
Humbly we serve one King—one Deity.

THE EARLY DAWN TO THE SUN

Impatiently I wait the waking of the hours, The hours awake with winds astir 'mid flowers, The Daffodils, sweet unafraid, though bent with dew,

And waiting for this boon I wait for you,

The sweetheart of one day,

The sweetheart of my play.

The play that of the rugged world am I,
Won by its sudden glories, glory to woo;
Sweetheart! Sweetheart! To Heaven I raise my
cry,—

Will you to me one perfect day be true?

Tenderly laughing to lead me on and on, Unnoticing the way save for its flowers, The trembling Daffodils with dew bent down, Flowers wakened with me when woke the radiant hours.

THE BURIED VOLCANO

Long time stilled in the earth's deepest silence, Not a witness to tell of my might. My quick heart has a secret in keeping, Not a flame of its fire in sight.

Sleep you well, all you trouble-worn children, Come as close as you will to my breast, Not a flash of my luminous passion Shall be startling your dreamless, sweet rest.

Could you guess at my tireless mercy,
You would know that in hoarding my power,
My one sceptre to life I am yielding
So to spare you sleep's comforting hour.

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WHEN SPRING COMES

Gathering glad days from the cold, Spring comes, in birth denying death. Strenuous, sweet, life-giving breath, To quicken hearts, both new and old.

EARLY APRIL

A wanderer is April,
A mendicant in rags,
Shivering, bent and craven,
With sombre mien she lags.

She sees the naked tree-tops,
Where nesting birds would go,
Were not the wood in sadness,
Its leaf o'erlaid with snow.

Her plaint ascends to Heaven,
She cries for smiling days.
Her prayer is sudden answered,
Flower-strewn the radiant ways.

In leaf the hundred tree-tops
Where nesting birds safe sleep,
And sunbeams foster harvests
That the sowers soon will reap.

SPRING'S INCENSE

Could I wrest from the mountains their secrets, What beauty would lie at my feet? Earth's fire, that burning spring incense, Would escape in a breath heather-sweet.

And then if this comforting perfume
Would caress me with happy intent,
'Twould conquer my grief and complaining,
'Twould master my soul-discontent.

APRIL

After laughter, overtearful, After grieving, overgay, Oversad then overcheerful, Changeful April kisses May.

Kisses when the winds are sleeping, Kisses when the buds unfold, Kisses, whether glad or weeping, Whether day is young or old.

Loving April, mad or saddened, Overgrieved or overgay, Springtime would not blossom gladdened, If you kissed not, kissing May.

JUNE DAYS

June days are made by magic
Inciting to speech the trees.
June days are made by music
Thrilling the birds and breeze.
June days are made by mystery,
Mysteries of love—all these.

Ah, loveliest these, the June days
Sweet with the singing bird,
Breeze-whispers mellowing sadness,
Hearts to the joy-time stirred.
Yea, quickening Love to completeness,
June's lure is in music heard.

EXPECTANCY

Heaven be kind and kiss the snow
With May-time and the happy sun,
That I may feel the Spring and know
Expectancy in life begun.

MARCH

March is master of poor April,
A captive cowering and bent,
In wrath he breaks her trees in budding,
Whereof the leaf a greeting sent;
The little tender word of springtime
Was punished for its first content.

March is master of poor April,
Who hurt yet sweet again beguiles,
Forgiving March and with fresh ardour
She flashes smiles on smiles;
Her unrestrained contentment wakened
She radiates earth's miles on miles.

MAY TO JUNE

May held a joy within her breast Unafraid yet unconfessed: Held it fast till June came near, Alluring with her smile and tear.

Said May to June, "For love all true, My best bloom I kept back for you, That yours should be the laughing flower And yours the perfumed, perfect hour."

SPRING'S JEWELS

Threaded on a cobweb,
Shine dewdrops in the sun,
A necklace strung for Springtime,
Whose garments are gold-spun.

She decks herself in jewels
That sparkle in sea-spray,
Their myriad rainbow colours,
The glowing glints of day.

The moon-white curling tendrils
From flower-vines she stems,
To lay them on her tresses,
Woven in diadems.

And everywhere is treasure,
Spilled far by thieving winds
Who stole from heaven the amber,—
The sapphires that she finds.

Gems gleam in golden showers, In crystals light the gloom. They star the waiting flowers Wherever earth has room.

MIDWINTER

His arms are full and overheavy
With cold that ages stored away,
The cold that threads the mountain fissures,
That turns the singing forest grey.

Upon his brain no love-impression
That wakes o'erwhelming heart desire,
No hot, pursuing master-passion
To melt his frozen soul with fire.

All ignorant of tender memories, Not curious of what might be, Sublimely staunch is old midwinter, From self-effacing weakness free.

DEAR MIDSUMMER

Ah, who could know the secrets hid
Far deep in dear midsummer's heart?
One delves not there—the gods forbid
That we should steal her mystic art.

No hesitating hand is hers
While poppy-red she paints the field,
And on the ocean soft confers
The blue by cloudless skies revealed.

She skirts the fragrant sleeping woods And buries there the sweet-pea pod, Then, in her more triumphant moods She flaunts the stately goldenrod.

Midsummer, I must ever burn
A lover's incense at your shrine,
Your mystic art I may not learn
But let your ravishments be mine.

SUMMER DAYS

When summer days are waning,
The vagrant shadows pass,
As weird and spectral shadows
They haunt the dew-wet grass.

When living leaves are stricken And dies the singing bird, There's pathos in the moaning With subtle anguish stirred.

When summer days are waning, Dear Love, are you awake, Or with the shadows failing Does soul your life forsake?

THE OLD, OLD STORY

In glowing leaf that interlaces
October gathers sheen and graces
From Summer's dead the echoing hosts:
'Tis afterglow, the old, old, story,
Death's uttermost and then—a glory;
The conqueror displacing ghosts.

AUGUST

Inhaling passion with the scents
Uprising from the marsh or fen,
My love is spent on innocents—
On flower-hearts, on hearts of men.

Then wearied with this joy, I run Athwart the glowing boundary Of summer gone and fall begun,—
The high built wall of mystery.

And then my ministries of faith
Lie dead in Autumn's grasping hand;
In meadow-mist I fade a wraith,
Passing at Autumn's high command.

SPRING IS HERE

A quiver of a leaf in budding,
An hour soft, golden-eyed and clear,
A flash of scarlet in the greening,
A wing of blue and Spring is here—

Spring is here and hearts are holding All the magic of its day,— Holding fragrance sweet infolding Safe laid away, safe laid away.

THE RAIN OF MAY

The soul of me crying through tears,
My sorrow in telling is sorrow retold,
The soul of me cold,
When true to the heart of me I am but sad
When earth is most glad—
The soul of me crying through tears!

I'm a prophet, the first of God's seers,
A prophet foretelling the bloom of the seed,
Exotic or weed,
Yet true to the heart of me I am but sad,
When earth is most glad—
A prophet, the first of God's seers!

Because of my sorrow and tears,
The seed and the bloom are the fruit of my fears,
This year and all years;
For this though I'm sad I sometimes am glad
That earth is gay clad
Because of my sorrow and tears

A JUNE SONG

Whatever winsome wiles I know,
I learn them when the June winds blow,
Kissing the sleeping buds to wakefulness:
The little melting winds that scent
The open space until forespent,
Changing to bloom life's wilderness.

THE LEAF TO THE TREE

First fruitage of the springtime, Free born, yet slave am I, Half willing in my bondage My birth to justify.

I'd stay with you for ever My mothering green tree, Were not wild winds, wild waters Your foes, while friends to me.

They tear me from your heart-strings,
Then jubilant am I,
While you are worn at parting,
As far away I fly.

AUTUMN'S ARTISTRY

In fervour is the work begun,
When Autumn gilds the wheat in sheaf
And drawing fire from the sun
She lays its glory on her leaf.

When Plenty paints the red on brown,
The long last smile from summer won,
Then light as flies the thistledown
The Autumn's artistry is done.

SPRING

Bear you blossoms that the tree In self expression, sweet, shall be, Or bear you bloom for beauty's sake, That earth may of its joy partake?

THE NORTH WIND

Thousands of years in heaven
Taught you no word of this,—
Sighs with your voice to leaven,
Softer the blooms to kiss.

Naught have you done to save them, Longings that live in flowers, Kissing the souls God gave them, Watching their wasting hours.

Yet are you life to Nations— Hope to the stifling trees, Soul to all sultry Creations, Spirit to sinking seas.

Thousands of years in heaven
Left you at heart a child,
Angered though seven times seven,
By love are you last beguiled.

THE EAST WIND

As with a sword it rends the air,
No sacrifice, in love defers,
And of the fainting dead aware,
It fills the ocean sepulchres
With poison, pestilence and pain,
With fury spending wrath in vain.

THE SOUTH WIND

Flown from the world of dreaming, Whim of the wandering year, Lost in the golden gloaming, How did you find this sphere?

You are the balm to oceans, Peace to the stars in fold, Answer to man's devotions, Prayer to a faith foretold.

Ravished from heaven your smiling, You are earth's solace fulfilled, Self to desire reconciling, Thrilling a day unthrilled.

Soothed by your kiss, fair flowers
The bloom of the happy year,
Glad is this world of ours,
Once you have found this sphere.

THE WEST WIND

Oh, turn your fondest face to mine,
That, in your fourfold soothing breath,
Your pure white heart I may divine,
Then die with you a willing death;
And, softly as a fading sigh,
Homing heavenward with you fly.

A COMPASSIONATE LOVER

With the North wind a-swirl in the tree-tops
All the leaves are a-tremble with fear,
With the West wind too fond and desiring
Leaves are aging, are sallow and sere,
And the East wind akin to the North wind
On all leaves lays a withering blight,
But the South wind has heart and caressing,
It brings to the leaf-world delight.

Though I shrink not from North winds avenging.

Nor from West winds which shrivel the weak,

Nor would drop in the path of the East wind, 'Tis the kissable South wind I seek.

And 'tis far I would follow its leading,
To the deeps I would go, there it goes,
To dim heights I would fly, should it fly there,
If I die may its wings o'er me close.

If I die may its breath calm my moaning, Caressing may its heart for me bleed, May its arms hold me safe in the going, A compassionate lover in need, At the death bear me on to God's heaven, Hold me dear while my spirit is freed.

THE TEMPEST

Of mighty winds I am the one— The freelance swung in space, And as a brave, his war begun, Running to conquer in the race, I sweep all weaklings from the air, Joy in my heart with their despair.

Invincible, my arm I raise

To seize the strong and whip the free,
And fired with the fighter's craze,
I battle with the angered sea.
Yea, this I do—yet vanquished I
With one bright glance adown the sky.

WHERE THE WIND BLOWS

Blow oh! winds and blow you well, Searching meadows, marsh or dell, Find you there each newborn thing, The violet or the lark whose wing Unfeathered is and so unspread, The lark safe nested in his bed.

Blow oh! winds and soft in flight, Gather leaves to toss to Night To cover all these tender things Of flowered or soft feathered wings So sleep they safe abed, till dawn Wakens to find them winged and gone.

THE SONG OF THE WINDS

Myriad songs are the songs of the winds, But the whistling of one on the city street Measures the music that springtime finds

None too sweet, None too fleet For the child's dancing feet.

True as the trilling of birds sings one,
Lyrical soft in rhythmic rune,
Melody soothing, yet quick begun
Near the dune,
Sets the tune
For the footstep of June.

Sung with a lilt the wind-song sings, Voicing a love that heart-peace brings,

Yet the lute
And the flute,
Tuned aright for the gay,
Sing no happier lay,
Than the wind-song light sings
For the dance of the day.

MY LADY DAFFODIL

Love lurks in strange disguises,
(In quick surprises
I divine,)
And in sunshine kisses, settles
On your petals,
Lady mine.

Did you call Love to you guiding,
All unchiding,
To your lair?
Did you find him round you reaching,
Sweet beseeching,
Find him fair?

THE EDELWEIS

Shut in where Autumn's leafy glow
May never reach,
I keep
Asleep
Till snowdrops teach
My heart to beat to weal or woe.

Shut in where tumult never wakes,

I never know
The years
Through tears,
So 'tis not woe

To blossom 'neath the kind snow-flakes.

LOVE-IN-THE-MIST

'Mid flowers sweet-laden
With favours sun-kissed,
None so fair as the maiden
Sweet Love-in-the-Mist.

And could I but paint her,
Paint fire in her eyes,
Her face no less quainter,
She would waken heart-wise.

But the butterfly lover
Who, amorous, bold,
Seeks her eyes to discover
Finds them chiding and cold.

When his heart he confesses, Then shrinking her mien As she sinks 'neath her tresses Of feathery green.

Oh long have you waited, My Love-in-the-Mist, For suitors unhated; Why in waiting persist?

THE VIOLET

Crushed in my hand a violet lies, With her vanishing breath what falters and dies?

What lay in her heart pent up too long? What was born as she died? Was it sorrow or song?

Crushed in my hand a violet lies,
Who in watching her vanishing breath is wise?
I look for her soul in its heavenward flight,
I see it. Can you with immortal sight?

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WHO KNOWS?

Who knows

That this purpled dust was once a rose,

The rose

That in Love's fertile garden grows?

Her heart

Knew grief,

So fell the leaf

From leaf apart,

And, certain of her woe, who cares?

To probe her death who would, who dares?

THE SCARLET GERANIUM

In her heart
Is the light and the life of the Morning,
In her eyes is the flash of Noon-fire.

Whose the art,
The full flame in her heart and eyes scorning,
To change white her resplendent attire?

In her heart, Is Love's passion, the scarlet compelling, Whose the art that shall hold it in thrall?

Whose the art?
Who tells me I'll pay for the telling,
With the gold that the sunshine lets fall.

CLOVERS

Happiness drunk in with dew,
The clovers into rovers grew,
Illusive errant creatures they
Went happily afar to lay
Their young where nesting things had been,
The soft green feathered grass within.

So rovers for all time they stay, Each year to haunt some alien way And where in clans they gathering meet There all the world is honey-sweet; And zephyrs, from the sea-kissed wood, Taste the sweet dew and find it good.

THE PIPSISSEWA

In yonder forest gloom where folds
A leafy dark upon a dark,
Pipsissewa her torch upholds
And by its little gleaming spark
I see the shyest denizen
That in the woodland hides from men.

And seen thereby, I can descry
The sweet alarm of fairy folk
Affrightened by a vagrant sigh
That in the pine tree music woke;
Fretted I would hush this breeze
Startling such timid sprites as these.

For who would not save such from fear,
Those who look with hesitating eyes
Upon this strange man-haunted sphere?
Would that I could myself disguise
And with elfin wings be made a fay,
Fore'er with fays a friend to stay.

THE BLUEBELL

A Bluebell caught a raindrop And held it to her breast, A stranger from the skyland 'Twas happy there to rest.

But butterflies were thirsty
And scenting a new brew,
They fell upon the bluebell
And drank the raindrop dew.

It was a startled Bluebell
Who drooped in her surprise,
When robbed of her one treasure,
By wayward butterflies.

THE TULIP

Impatient for her fair fulfilment,
A tulip bursts her prison bars,
Escaping earth to scan the heavens,
And watch the slowly fading stars.

Her curling wings are kin to sunshine, Her simple heart is true as gold: She looks about to find her fellows, To see who else has dared the cold.

A crocus comes, then shy arbutus, Adventurous, white-lipped, half numb, They tell her they have followed, bidding Their trembling sisters soon to come.

And as they call, wee heads are peering
Where withered leaf with green inweaves,
Each saying to the other, "Hurry,
Lest Spring our gladdest hope deceives."

THE SOUTH WIND TO THE VIOLET

Sad-hued as purpling twilight In waiting perfect sleep, The violet binds her petals A fold on fold to keep.

To keep till I, caressing
Kiss the perfumed wings apart,
While whispering I ask her,
To be my true Sweetheart.

Her answering sigh is tender,
A breath so faint and low
You hear it not, I guess it
From her blue eyes' newborn glow.

DANDELIONS

I saw a nearby golden light,
Starring the shadowless soft green,
The green where Spring's first smile is seen;
It seemed a sunray lost in flight
Or else a sleeping butterfly,
A yellow bird there left to die.
Then with the shining prize in sight,
I followed with the gentlest tread—
Went nearer, nearer to the bed
Shimmering with the golden light;
I followed there to find afield
But gleaming dandelions revealed.

MAY AND THE LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY

There is a maiden gentle, free,
A rose fleck missed her paling cheek,
Her robe is all of virgin white,
Her voice is melting, low and meek.

And slipping down her body falls
Her waving hair worn, proudly, so,
It clings and keeps her close and shades
Her heaven-blue eyes, their unspent glow.

This maiden free, not knowing shame,
Her heart and love on me bestows,
Unasked, unkissed, she kisses me
When the moon is glad and star-light glows.

And I my frozen heart awakes,
Her scented lips laid sweet on mine,
And thus I learn, though cycles old,
The secret of a love divine.

THE JUNE DAY ROSEBUD

Enchanted by a June-day rosebud,
Too long a dew-drop kissed its cheek
And stealthily a south wind blowing
Drove it away in jealous pique.

The South Wind coveted this blossom And (wonted to her loveliness), He bore her to his far-off homeland, There held her slave in tenderness.

But, sick for earth and warm moss-bedding The grieving rosebud paled too soon And, weeping soft, she cried her eyes out, Was buried with the dying moon.

THE WATER LILY

Delayed by hushing wings of night,
The stream lies languid in the pool,
And buried there is Day's Delight,—
The water lily, calm and cool.

And, lest a frightened wind arise
To spoil this still and lonely grave,—
Strong watchers wake in silent guise,—
The sedges that encircling save.

PANSIES

Dear pansies give sweet greeting, To unfamiliar spring. They tell of clans, in meeting— Of secret happening.

They tell that once, in stealing,
They stole a sunbeam's ray,
And hid it far, concealing
Its glow from mourning Day.

So tell of tricks in playtime
When the yellow in their eyes
Changed purple in the daytime,
Dame April to surprise.

Such little sober faces,
And yet so full of guile,
Just one with gentle graces
And disingenuous smile.

This one to me revealing
These secrets long untold,
Is shamed, so shame concealing
Returned to earth's safe fold.

WHEN ROSES BLOOM

When June days beckon, roses plead, Then I am vanquished, for I know That I must follow where they lead, Follow, or else heart's heaven forego.

CHERRY BLOSSOMS

Lily-white;
Heart's delight,
A-tremble if the winds blow wild,
Will you fly
Heavenward high,
If winds a-blowing, blow more wild?

Lily-white
Heart's delight,
To Love's sweet music will you sing?
Will you fall
At my call,
And kiss me with the breath of Spring?

EARLY ARBUTUS

Oh! child of earth
Glad I love you, love you so,
I would hold the day all still,
So to keep you where you grow:
Your scented breath I would distill
To keep its fragrance ever new,
Thus I love you, only you.

Oh! child of earth
Spirit of the dreaming wood,
Near the laughing water you:
I would charm you if I could,
Hold you to my breast so true
Keep your sweetness, sweet alone,
'Gainst my heart, my very own.

ROSES

With lavish hand June scatters roses;—
The rose with tender cheeks aflame,
The tattered rose who pales with shame,
The rose whose heart pure gold discloses,
With rose whose flushing vies with morn,
The snow-white rose who hides her thorn.

This queenly rose July deposes,
Her petals in swift drooping spread,
The lily reigning in her stead.
Her Kingdom ravished, June reposes
Just where the white rose laid her head,
The rose of all the roses dead.

PUSSY WILLOWS

Like slim grey hands of time are they,
Pointing the way to range and change:
From approaching skies so warm and strange
In languishing they stray away,
Swift to follow fading spring,
Dying when early robins sing.

THE DAFFODIL AND THE BEE

Down in the grass, a daffodil.

And basking in her smile, a bee,
Each with a mission to fulfil;
The daffodil her dew to spill,
The bee to drink it thirstily
And therefrom nectar to distill.

Oh! greedy bee and daffodil,
Felicitous your destiny,
The golden dew on earth to spill,
Or golden nectar to distill
As sun-gods sip it thirstily,
Ere shadows their dark fate fulfil.

THE PRIMROSE

April will you call me,
Touch me and enthrall me
Of all the roses first?
Show me once your treasures,
Tell me of the pleasures
By springtime last rehearsed.

Tell me how to fashion,
Smiles from out of passion,
So tell me true and now.
Then, will I tell you after,
Why you fashion laughter
From tears, tell true and how.

FOR LOVE IT GREW

In ravishing the earth for bloom,
Its every garden searching through,
I find one rose that lights the gloom
As glowing red for Love it grew.

ROSE OF THE GLAD TIME

Oh! Rose of the glad time,
Oh! Rose of the earth,
Long men have sought you
Sought you in birth,
Your leaf then in bud time
When pink in first flush:
Men fought for, then sought you
Though your heart beats a-hush.

True Love never faltered,
(Life's way up or down)
Though your cheeks to pale altered,
Your dress turned to brown,
He sought you to dare you,
And with time fleet of wing,
He sought you to snare you,
Earth's one precious thing.











